

one twin-engine Me-110 and five 109th Messers. Moreover, one of them was shot down along with the commander of JG-27, Major V. Schelmann (a war veteran in Spain, 14 personal victories). In addition, without indicating the place of the air battle, two Me-109s and one Me-110 from the air groups of the 2nd Air Force were irretrievably lost. Luftwaffe, based in the "Suwalk ledge". Two more Me-109s and two Me-110s received minor damage (from 12 to 40%), and one Do-215 returned to base with three wounded crew members. Total: 10 destroyed and 5 damaged enemy

aircraft. Of course, all these losses of the enemy cannot be firmly and unambiguously attributed to the victories of the pilots of the 127th IAP - next to Grodno, another fighter regiment (the 122nd IAP) fought (albeit for a very short time and not very successfully), the events in which will be discussed speech further; Soviet anti-aircraft gunners and airborne gunners of Soviet bombers were not inactive. Be that as it may, the 11 downed German aircraft declared by the pilots of the 127th regiment, most likely, do not go beyond a very modest 1.5-fold overestimation of the number of victories. The very conditional "accuracy" of these estimates does not allow answering the question - which of the fighter regiments, the 123rd or 127th, can be called the most productive on the basis of the first day of the war (but in any case, it should be taken into account that if the airfield 127 th IAP was far enough from the main operational areas, then in the Brest-Kobrin strip, a concentrated attack by the elite units of the Luftwaffe hit the airfields of the 10th SAD). It is noteworthy that both the 123rd and 127th regiments entered the war on "seagulls", i.e. on the most obsolete type of Soviet

fighter aircraft. The courage, fortitude and skill shown by the pilots of the 127th IAP in an atmosphere of general chaos and collapse cannot but arouse the deepest respect. And I would really like to put a full stop at this place - or even an exclamation point. Unfortunately, we will have to put another question

mark. The smallest number of aircraft found in the documents in the 127th IAP is determined as 70 I-153. On the first day of the war, 12 were lost (including forced landings outside the airfield, which in the situation on June 22 meant the actual loss of the aircraft). A question for a first grader - how many planes are left?

However, on the evening of June 22, only 33 "seagulls" flew to the airfields of Shchuchin, Zheludok, Lida, Slonim. Nothing is said about the remaining 25 combat aircraft in the Record Book. Absolutely nothing - there is no mention that they were out of order by the start of hostilities, or that they were damaged during a single enemy raid on the Lesishche airfield, or transferred to other units, or destroyed during the withdrawal ...

As you know, the same glass can rightfully be called both "half empty" and "half full". Of course, 58 aircraft are more than 33. But even 33 fighters in a regiment is not a little at all, not every Luftwaffe air group had such a number of serviceable combat aircraft. It would seem that it is too early to talk about the "destruction" of the 127th IAP. However, the next (after June 22) entry in the "Journal of combat work" appears only ... on July 17. And this conditionally combat work takes place (*"the task is completed, the enemy aircraft were not met"*) from the airfield of Serpukhov near Moscow, in the deep rear. (281)

There are incomparably fewer documents that allow recreating the history of the combat operations **of the 122nd IAP** in the first days of the war. The archive fund of the regiment preserved the "Report on the combat work of the 122nd IAP from 22.6 to 12.15.41", in which only a few lines are given to the events of June 22: "On June 22, 1941 at 3.30 the regiment was alerted *and prepared to take off within 20 minutes ...* " Then in these lines there is a fairly standard description of fierce air battles, downed enemy aircraft, however, after these successes, the second day of the war fit into one phrase: "On June 23, by order of the *Commander of the Red Army Air Force, the personnel left for reorganization* (i.e., the planes have already ended. - M.S.) *in the city of Ryazan, the Dyagilevo airfield.* (282)

Some scraps of information can be found in the combat reports of the headquarters of the 11th SAD. At 11:00 on June 22, Colonel Vorobyov, Chief of Staff of the 11th SAD, and Colonel Sviridov, Head of the Operations Department of the Front Air Force Headquarters, exchanged the following

messages by telegraph: "*Kopets* (Air Force Commander of the Western Front) *allowed your aircraft to maneuver with airfields in the Skidel area,*

Bridges, Lida at the discretion of the division commander. -

There is no connection with Novy Dvor (the airfield of the 122nd IAP) . I have information that the enemy is on the line (inaudible). I ask for orders to relocate 122 IAP. That's all I wanted to say.

- I answer. Immediately relocate 122 IAP..." (283) Half an hour later, at 11.30, the following words appear on the telegraph tape: "Major Beskaravayny is at the apparatus.

Relocate 122 IAP immediately. "They have already relocated to the Lida

airfield ..." (284) If these reports are to be believed, then at least

until 10 a.m. the 122nd IAP, without relocating anywhere, remained at its airfield. In the report of the headquarters of the 11th SAD (no later than 14.00) there is an indirect message about an enemy air raid on the Novy Dvor airfield, while the losses known to the headquarters are relatively small: "122 IAP burned 4 and disabled several. Exactly how much, I can't say. (285) Similar loss figures are also indicated in the Combat Report No. 02 of the headquarters. 3rd Army (whose operational subordination was the 11th SAD): "From 4 hours 30 minutes to 7 hours, 4 raids were made on the Novy Dvor airfield by groups of 13-15 aircraft.

Losses: 2 aircraft burned out, 6 disabled. 2 people were seriously injured, 6 - lightly. (286) In the evening (rather even "night") Opersvodka No. 02 of the Air Force Headquarters of the Western Front, the losses of the 122nd IAP at the Novy Dvor airfield grow to 15 aircraft. (287)

Surprisingly, in none of the identified documents there is any mention of fighters of the 122nd IAP shot down in battle. The only, albeit very shaky, confirmation that there were still combat losses can be the information that German pilots from III / JG-53 claimed 6 I-16s shot down in the Grodno region. (262) If the Germans did not make a mistake in determining the type of aircraft and the air battle area and did not overestimate the number of victories more than usual, then we can assume that the 122nd IAP actually lost 3-4 in the air

"donkey".

In the evening at 18.30, a combat report (b / n) was sent by telegraph from the headquarters of the 11th SAD to the front air force headquarters. By this time, "7 crews of the 122nd IAP and the regiment commander at the Lida airfield, 10 crews of the 122nd IAP

at the Lesishche airfield. (288) Where are the others? The headquarters of the division, apparently, no longer knew about this. It is only known that by the beginning of hostilities the regiment had 69 I-16 fighters, at least 59 pilots, 97 technicians and aircraft mechanics, and 88 junior aviation specialists. (289) The next day, June 23, the morning (by 11.50) combat report about

the 122nd IAP no longer mentions ... For lack of documentary evidence, we turn to such a not very reliable source as memoirs[30]. In the above-mentioned memoirs of Lieutenant-General S. F. Dolgushin, the events of the first days and hours of the war are described as follows:

"... At 2.30 - alarm ... We were the first to prepare, then the 1st squadron, which stood near the tents. They ran out of the tents, and after 5 - 10 meters their planes stopped. We look: there are "six" aircraft - three are coming, and three more are behind. What it is? Teachings, right? Again, we will not understand anything ... And then they turned around and began to beat us. Moreover, first from machine guns, and when they pass at low altitude, they throw "shells" (small fragmentation bombs. - M.S.). One fragment hit the plane, pierced the skin and pierced the tank. True, we had protectors in the tanks, and they immediately "melted" the hole, we didn't even change the tanks ... There were no special losses - one car was beaten.

Seryozhka Makarov won't start in any way, and I went to take off ... I went to Grodno, to see what was there. Our troops are crossing the Neman to the east, to the city. I passed along the border ... I sat down, I reported: "They crossed the border, they are coming to us. The troops are here, the tanks are here." There were no our troops: only some border guards, and that's all (except for the border guards, the direction of Suwalki, Avgustov, Grodno was covered by two rifle divisions: the 27th and 56th, and in the immediate vicinity of the airfield of the 122nd IAP, near the town of Ruzhanystok, the 7th artillery anti-tank brigade was deployed. - M.S.) As soon as we started refueling, the squadron commander approached me and said: "Sergey, we are flying to Cherleny (an obvious mistake, judging by the context, we are talking about the airfield of the 127th IAP, i.e. Lesishche or Skidel. - M.S.), where the 127th regiment of our division "... While I refueled the car, the regiment had already flown away. The deputy commander of the regiment took off in front of me ... And then the "four" leaves, he - and then the "eight" (German aircraft.

actually at the airport. I went to take off, and they didn't even pay attention to me. I took off - the tanks are already visible ... They are already 5-10 kilometers away, and eight aircraft are hanging over the airfield ... "

So, according to the narrator, the regiment was alerted not even at 3.30, but an hour earlier. There was an early morning raid on Novy Dvor airfield. Losses from it are minimal. The regiment left the airfield not at 11 or 10 in the morning, but much earlier. Who gave this order is unclear. On the morning of June 22, there were no German tanks west of Grodno - the nearest to the scene of the events, the 12th Wehrmacht Panzer Division advanced from Suwalki to Merkina, i.e. was 70 km to the north.

10 009 4

123 и дн. Имелись не только
 разрывы подвешенных бомбардировщиков
 и при этом в воздухе
 кипевших бомбардировщиков и танков
 в 13.55 до 14.42. В этот
 стрелки танков III и IV
 разрывы
 Команды полка майор
 Сурин Игорь
 Сброс танков III-4 сгорел
 мины 3.
 123 и дн. полковник 4, пропал
 без вести - 5.
 Потери 674 человек.
 Связь с 39 дн. не имела.

Report from the commander of the 10th SAD dated June 22, 1941

For "tanks" from a flight altitude, one could take the so-called. "assault guns", one or two batteries of which (i.e. from 6 to 12 units) were attached to the 256th Wehrmacht infantry division advancing on Novy Dvor. The history of the combat route of the 256th Infantry Division is described in detail, in particular, it is noted that on June 22, 1941, "the advanced units of the 481st Infantry Regiment reached at 12.30 a field airport 4 km north of Novy Dvor and shot 19 aircraft, which were already caught on start". July 2, 1941 Nazi officialdom, the newspaper "Völkischer

beobachter" devoted an entire article to the achievements of the commander of the 481st regiment (however, by that time these achievements had already been published under the heading "Brilliant heroic death"). The article said that *"the regiment's advanced unit stormed the field airfield of the Bolshevik Air Force and destroyed 19 aircraft in the process."* Judging by the memoirs of Dolgushin, Goebbels' propagandists got excited with the story about the "storm" ...

"I come to a new airfield - there is a cross, and the funnels are still smoking, it is impossible to land. I passed the checkpoint of the airfield, sat down, taxied in, looked - there are already three planes there. It was the guys in front of me who returned from the mission ... Then the eight "110s" came and started to beat us. You can't fly from under them! They stormed off - but the most important thing: Ganichev (commander of the 11th SAD) and Colonel Zakharov, his deputy, are standing at the airfield and directing the leveling. They were hit. They hit Zakharov in the forehead, and Ganichev in the stomach - he died two hours later (according to the documents, this tragedy occurred at 12.30, but at the Lida airfield, and the name of the deputy was Yuzeev; on the evening of June 22, the commander of 127 1st IAP lieutenant colonel Gordienko. - M.S.). And at the airport there is no one from the author left..."

At this airfield, the regiment was on the I-153, they had only ShKAS weapons, so there were no shells for the guns. And we had ammunition. Then we flew from this airfield and started fighting. We flew. The guns do not work, they stand, because there are no shells. Only ShKAS. But I shot down one Yu-88.

We bachelors decided to fly away[31]. The guns are empty. It's getting dark, and we are commanded to "fly to Lida". Our regiment takes off first. And in Lida, only half of the airfield remained. Arrived, sat down. There is no fuel, no ammunition ... The pilots made 3 - 4 sorties without eating, the temperature is high, everyone is dirty, sweaty ... Fuel is in the tank, underground. What to get? (the division had 22 tankers and 14 water and oil tankers. - M.S.) We don't even have buckets - and our tanks are almost empty. The technical staff is still catching up with us ...

In general, they flew. We had supper and went to bed... Just fell asleep - anxiety. They say that in the area of the airfield from the eastern side they dropped a landing force. We ran to the airfield, we run up to the airfield, there is such good clean grass in the ditches, and we all got there.

They hit, but you still have to get up! They got up, they came - and the planes had empty tanks. What to do? Nobody knows anything. How to run cars? Nothing. Not far from the airfield

there was a building where the headquarters of the regiment and doctors were located. As soon as we entered the basement, Me-110 "sixes", "eights" went one after another and both regiments were completely bombed. And we can't do anything! There were a lot of serviceable planes, but without fuel, without weapons ... Nobody became interested in this ... They just received a command to leave.

In operational report No. 03 of the Front Air Force Headquarters, this was "completely bombed out" as follows: "At 4.45, 12 Do-17 aircraft bombed the Lida airfield. No damage" (TsAMO, f. 208, op. 2589, d. 53, l. 19). In general, we

received a command - "in the car!" We went to the hotel, took our suitcases with us - and they took us to Moscow ... The road was not particularly memorable. Sometimes they met tank columns. On the 24th we reached Mozhaisk. We were placed in a hotel, the girls cleaned our uniforms, put us in order. The next day (this is already the 25th) we arrived in Moscow. We were placed in the premises where the Zhukovsky Academy is now, by the way, on the 2nd floor. We ended up in a room where, when I was in charge of the department, there was a methodical class - we, 4 people, slept in my future office. They asked for leave, went to Moscow. We went to the Metropol restaurant, and we had money, because we received an advance. We sat, but there was already a curfew in Moscow, so before 12 o'clock we managed to return from the Metropol to the Dynamo metro ... A few days later we moved to Ryazan ... "(274)

Comments, I hope, are already superfluous. One should only pay attention to the fact that on June 24, the day after the departure of the flight personnel of the 122nd IAP to Ryazan through Moscow and the Metropol, the commander of the Air Force of the 3rd Army (there was such a strange command structure in the combined arms armies) brigade commander Zaitsev still did not know where his fighter

regiments had gone: "... on June 22, 1941, on the night of June 23, 41, I sent the chief of staff of the Air Force of the 3rd Army, Colonel Teremov, to the airfields of Cherlena, Lesishche with a task, in case of a threat from side of the ground enemy, to relocate the regiments [to] new airfields - at his discretion.

The regiments have been relocated, but it is not known where, because. Colonel Teremov did not return and, apparently, was unable to convey ... Please tell me where the 122nd and 127th fighter regiments have been relocated, and give us their call signs and wave numbers ... "(290)

Another message about how the fighter regiments of the 11th SAD were "relocated" from the city of Lida is found in Operational reports No. 2 and No. 3 of the Lida air defense headquarters for June 23 and 24, 1941. This document is valuable because it represents is an impartial "view from the outside" - Captain Sumarov, commander of the 229th anti-aircraft artillery air defense, did not bear separate responsibility for the actions (and inaction) of fighter aircraft:
division

*"1. On 23.6.41 at 04.40, the enemy with a group of 15 Dornier-17 aircraft raided the city and military facilities of the Lida point, bombarded the airfield, the city. The OP of the 1st battery fired from machine guns ... At 5.25 on 23.6.41, the enemy with a force of 32 Heinkel-111 twin-engine bombers (the type of aircraft was most likely erroneously determined; one can only guess about errors in quantity. - M.S.) produced layered raids on the airfield and the OP of the 1st battery, dropped bombs from a dive and the OP of the 1st battery fired from machine guns. During the bombing of the airfield, **10 aircraft were destroyed on the ground** (hereinafter, it is underlined by me. - M.S.). Anti-aircraft artillery fired intensely. There is no interaction with aviation - **it does not rise from the airfield and is***

***destroyed on the ground.** During the period of fighting, 10 enemy aircraft were shot down, 880 shells were fired. 2. After the bombing of the city, all the administration, such as: the City Council, the Republic of Kazakhstan and the City Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of*

Bolsheviks, directors of enterprises, the police and the NKVD abandoned their posts and fled. The city was left without any management, as well as the districts. Hostile elements have begun to take away military depots left by military units without any protection, and the population is also taking everything away from various supply bases. The prison was dissolved. The political prisoners were also disbanded... In view of the fact that the fuel and lubricants warehouse and the main food warehouse remained intact in the city, one battery was put on guard at the named warehouses. The other two batteries were in marching

*position due to the danger of being captured and the lack of shells.
The division has absolutely no information from the side of the
combined arms command, but uses random rumors that do not give
any, at least an approximate idea of the situation ... " (291)*

2.6. On soundly sleeping airfields

The attentive reader must have noticed that from the description of the events of the first day of the war in the 9th, 10th and 11th air divisions, bomber regiments fell out, which in the amount of one were in each of these formations: the 13th BAP in the 9th SAD (airfield Borisovshchizna), the 16th BAP in the 11th SAD (Cherlen airfield), the 39th BAP in the 10th SAD (Pinsk and Zhabchitsy airfields). The first two were literally nearby, on airfields separated by the Neman and a distance of 12-15 km (see Map No. 4). As expected, the bomber regiments were located in the depths of the operational formation, separated from the border by a distance of 80 - 150 km and the "palisade" of the airfields of the fighter regiments. And this is the only thing that happened in reality and what "should have been expected." In all other respects, the failed military operations of the 13th and 16th BAPs make us recall the Soviet propaganda slogan about "peacefully sleeping airfields", and in its worst form.

Documentary evidence of the defeat, apparently, did not remain at all. In the operational reports of the divisions and the Air Force of the front, there is not a word about the 13th BAP; about the airfield of the 16th BAP already starting at 11.00 (Combat report No. 4 of the headquarters of the 11th SAD) it was said: *"Cherlen airfield. Planes are on fire. Let's figure out the details."* At 15.40, combat report No. 6 briefly reports the details: *"All materiel of the 16th BAP has been destroyed."* (292) At 18.30 the telegraph machine tapped out the following words: *"Cherlen airfield. The materiel has been destroyed. 11 crews of 16 BAP left for Bobruisk in a car for planes."* (293) The last phrase at first glance may seem almost an example of black humor, but everything here is quite serious: there were more than 20 Pe-2s at the Bobruisk airfield, intended for transfer to the west, to the bomber regiments of border divisions, and in the 16 By the beginning of the war, BAP had already prepared 39 crews for independent flights on this new type of

For lack of a better one, we will again have to turn to eyewitness accounts. Evidence recorded, alas, decades after the event, with the inevitable in a similar situation

memory errors and "ideological" retouching. Let's start with the memories of a technician who met the war as part of the ground personnel of the 13th BAP. *"Our regiment*

stood on the very border in the Bialystok region, the town of Ross (the base airfield of the 13th BAP was exactly there, and the regiment was relocated to the Borisovshchizna airfield after May 17. - M.S.), Volkovysk district. We were in camps. Was the airfield

camouflaged? Or were they lined up? They stood in line, and the staff lived in tents on the other side of the airfield. And to get to the parking lot, it was necessary to cross the runway. German planes flew in, threw bombs on the airfield and started shelling ... The parking lot was like a ruler, and someone shot through the engine, someone had the chassis. Disabled two or three squadrons. And the fourth was at the edge of the forest, and it was preserved, the Germans probably did not see it - it was four o'clock (as the record probably meant "four o'clock in the morning." - M.S.), it was still dark, they came in from the side of the forest...

- What planes? - Single

engine fighters. And then, at about eleven o'clock or a little earlier, twin-engine aircraft arrived ... By this time, our planes had already been dispersed, covered with camouflage nets ... But you can still see the white plane. From a great height, perhaps the disguise would have worked. But he came at a low altitude, brazenly, because there was no resistance. - And the planes were only white in color? - Well, would we have

time to paint, it was a few hours. Yes, and everyone was in a state of panic ... - But what about the orders of the command back in the spring of 1941 about

masking airfields and equipment? We

didn't know anything about them. - On June 21, already in the evening, Zhukov and Tymoshenko signed alert order. Did he reach you? We weren't told directly. - Was there an earlier order not to succumb to provocations? - Yes, it was...

This story can be considered an exemplary example of how, under the conditions of a totalitarian regime, real events and facts are forced out of consciousness by propaganda myths. From the town of Ross to the nearest point of the border of the 41st year, at least 100 km; if this is called "on the very border", then it must be admitted that in September 1939 Warsaw was "on the very border" with East Prussia, and Prague in March 1939 was completely "beyond the border" of the Czech Republic. However, the respected veteran spent 4 years in the war, and 45 post-war years in front of the loudspeaker of the Soviet radio, and therefore he "remembers for sure" that the airfields were on the very border, there was no whole series of pre-war orders to mask the airfields, and not existing in nature "an earlier order not to succumb

to provocations" - was *And now they flew at us. It was clear that the Germans were shooting at every plane, but on our planes everything was already prepared, the bombs were suspended. And our bombs were exploding, and fragments, bombs rolled along the airfield. The squadron, about which I said that it remained undamaged after the first raid, took off, ran out of gasoline (a strange combat mission. - M.S.) and just before this second raid returned and sat down. But now only one plane managed to take off. He flew away, landed in Orel, but*

crashed. At this point, we had no deaths yet. We have one task left - the protection of the airfield. Weapons were given to everyone, machine guns were taken. Then in the evening, at about eleven o'clock, they decided to take off and leave on foot,

taking with them a minimum - an overcoat, a gas mask ... - As a result, on

June 22, the regiment was almost completely destroyed? -

Fully. How many planes did

you manage to save? - No one. One almost ...

- Did you resist? - And there was no one, the planes were not ready... - Theoretically, if the plane is at the airfield, it should be refueled and it should have

weapons. You can get into the cockpit [gunner], shoot... -

Previously, before refueling the plane, gasoline was sent for examination. They ch

were sealed. -

Were there no weapons? - And the weapons in the warehouses ... Only personal weapons - rifles, and they were issued only ...

- When you left your airfield, did you leave the damaged equipment as is or burned it? - They left everything as it was.

Some of the planes had already been burned, others were disabled so that they would not have had time to repair before nightfall. And there was no command to burn the planes. - Have you heard

about someone being killed or injured on the morning of June 22? - I didn't

hear ... We weren't announced that someone had died. Personally, I don't know.

Where were the pilots at the time of the attack?

June 22 was a day off. All urgent service was in the camp. And where the officers were, I can not say. **Everyone gathered for dinner** (emphasis added by me. - M.S.). And one squadron, I mentioned, even took to the air.

- Did you know what is happening at neighboring airfields? There, twelve kilometers in a straight line, behind the Neman, was there another regiment of bombers?

- Yes, that was my son-in-law Nikolai Yakovlevich Kurakin, my sisters husband, 16th regiment, were in the same division (the divisions, of course, are different. - M.S.). We didn't have

fighter jets. - What did he say about how the war began for their regiment? - He was at the headquarters, the head of the airfield. But he didn't tell. My sister said that her husband came and said: "Gather everything you need, you are leaving for the rear." And they already had two children, two sons. He sent them. Apparently, he knew how things were ... " (294)

"Things are on." For military personnel - from an ordinary technician to the "head of the airfield" - the war seems to be an unexpected "force majeure". And all this happens in a regiment that successfully fought in the skies over Finland, one of the very first in the Soviet Air Force to receive dive bombers (first Ar-2, then Pe-2). There was "no one" to resist, after - according to the memoirs of the pilot of the 13th BAP, Lieutenant Colonel P. Tsupko - "from dawn to dusk, the squadron of disguised

aircraft with suspended bombs and weapons, with crews stood ready. (217) True, at one point the recollections of the two participants in the events completely coincide, as Tsupko writes, *"on Saturday evening, leaving behind the senior chief of the operator of the headquarters captain Vlasov, the command of the air regiment, many pilots and technicians left for their families in Russia ... The entire air garrison remained on care of the internal service, which was headed by junior lieutenant Usenko, on duty at the camp collection.* Well, if the regiment in the first hours of the war is commanded by a junior lieutenant, and the senior commanders "gathered for dinner," then what better could be expected? The events at the

airfield of **the 16th BAP** in Cherlena developed almost according to the same scenario . The historian from Grodno D. Kienko wrote down the story of A. B. Fedorova, who on the eve of the war worked as a salesman in the military department of the 16th BAP. Judging by her memoirs, things were like this: *"The first raid on Cherlena was made at about 4 in the morning, the second at 8 in the morning. After the second raid, there were no planes suitable for takeoff ... The first raid was directly on the aircraft parking, and then on the tent city. By that time, they managed to leave him and hide in the forest ... "* And

another story, this time from the son of a participant in the events: *"I, Georgy Georgievich Salnikov, son of Georgy Ivanovich Salnikov, gunner-radio operator of the 16th BAP. Somewhere in the 52-53s, he told me, a boy, the tragic story of the beginning of the war He woke up from a roar and shooting (but not from a combat alarm signal. - M.S.). Before his eyes, his commander Protasov took off and went to ram. As I understand it, he served in his squadron. Then, an hour later, German motorcyclists appeared, with whom they entered into battle, but soon German armored vehicles with infantry appeared and had to retreat. Somewhere **at 10-11 in the morning** (emphasis mine. - M.S.) they found an abandoned "lorry", the father wiped the wet distributor and started it. On it, 20-25 people from the 16th regiment reached Lida, they had the banner of the regiment and staff documents. They were all arrested, but soon released ... "*

In my opinion, the most reliable information is given in the story of the saleswoman: the personnel of the regiment managed to leave the airfield and hide in the forest. As for the "German armored personnel carriers with

infantry "(one such company was only in the tank divisions of the Wehrmacht, and even then not in all), then there were none at all in the Cherlena area; the foot infantry of the Wehrmacht appeared in those places not at 11 am on June 22, but three to four days later. Why the pilots of the 16th BAP who fled from the airfield were arrested in Lida is understandable. Why "soon released"? The above report by the commander of the 229th OZAD PVO gives a quite

convincing answer to this question. The historian D. Kienko, mentioned above, gives a very non-trivial

answer to one more question: *"Until 10 o'clock in the morning, the regiment remained in the dark about the outbreak of hostilities. Residents of the town of Lunno, which was 2 km from the airfield (Cherlena), heard and saw the bombing of the neighboring airfield Borisovshchizna (13th BAP from the 9th SAD) as early as 4 o'clock in the morning. Two neighboring airfields were separated by some 12 km. But the Cherlena airfield is separated from the town of Lunno by the Neman River and a forest on a hill, which, on the one hand, muffled the sounds of explosions, and on the other, hid the black smoke rising from the bombed parking lots of the neighbors."*

Strongly said. Burning aircraft of one regiment, alas, could not be used as signal fires to alert another air regiment. There was no other way to transmit information in 6 hours for 12 km in the presence of fifty aircraft. Everyone "knows" that there were no means of radio communication in the Red Army, and it is useless to argue with this "knowledge". I will confine myself to a brief reference - as of April 1, 1941, the Red Army Air Force (not counting the on-board radios!) There were: - 32 PAT radio stations (power 1.2

kW, range from 600 to 2000 km); - 404 RAF radio stations and 11 AK (power 400 -

500 W, range up to 300 km);

- 460 RSB radio stations and 5 AK (power 50 W, range actions from 50 to 100 km). (296)

In an extreme case, the crews and command of the 13th and 16th BAPs should have been awakened by the first in a row and very weak in consequences raid of "single-engine fighters" (probably, we are talking about one or two units of "Messerschmitts" from JG-27, which the entire first day of the war worked as lungs

bombers and attack aircraft). The first raids on both airfields took place early in the morning, presumably between 4 and 5 o'clock. The rout took place much later, after 5-6 hours, when the assault strike of a large group of German aircraft (according to M. Timin, these were Me-110s from the 2nd group of the ZG-26 squadron, the ZhBD of the 127th IAP reported about the raid on Cherlena with a large formation of Do-215 bombers) did not draw a line under the existence of two Soviet bomber regiments[32] Of course, not everyone took

refuge in the forest. Several reconnaissance flights were made by the crews of the 13th BAP (in Tsupko's memoirs there is also an indistinct mention of either a planned or even actually carried out raid by one squadron on the German airfield near Siedlce), at least three aircraft of the 16th BAP took off during an enemy attack. In the last 10 years, an air ram was repeatedly mentioned, committed by the crew of Captain Anatoly Protasov - taking off from the Cherlen airfield, he sent his SB to the German Me-110. The Luftwaffe has not yet been able to confirm this version with reports of Luftwaffe losses: in the ZG-26 heavy fighter squadron (and there was simply no other Me-110 formation on the northern flank of the Western Front), only two Me-110s received minor damage on June 22 (20% and 30% , which, according to the German accounting system, means "damage that can be repaired by aircraft repair units"). It is clear that a head-on collision in the air of two 7-ton machines would have completely different consequences ...

Managed to take part in the hostilities of the first day of the war and two squadrons of the 39th BAP. In the early morning, the commander of the 10th SAD, Colonel Belov, ordered the division inspector for piloting technique, captain Shcherbakov, and the division navigator, captain Zarukin, to conduct aerial reconnaissance over the river. Bug in the zone of the 4th army. (216) Then, after the crossings had been established, an order was sent to Pinsk by a communications aircraft (the wire connection had already been interrupted) to the commander of the 39th BAP to bomb the enemy troops crossing. At 7 o'clock in the morning, two nines of the SB (one of them was led by Captain Shcherbakov) set off on the first (and last that day) sortie. The carelessness and arrogance of the Germans were so great that at the crossings over

Melnik and Yanov - Podlyaska (30 km northwest of Brest), Soviet bombers did not meet any anti-aircraft or fighter opposition. (40) If you believe the later report (and you can believe it with very big reservations), the crossing was destroyed in this sortie, *"as well as up to the enemy infantry battalion."* (242) Be that as it may, this was the first air strike on enemy ground forces on the Western Front.

This was the end of the active operations of the 39th BAP on the first day of the war. According to M. Timin, the strike group, without losing a single aircraft, immediately set off on a long journey, to the Bobruisk airfield, after landing on which, by decision of the command of the 13th BAD, they were relocated even further, to the Novaya Serebryanka airfield (beyond the Dnieper in the Rogachev area). From there, already in the early morning of June 23, one nine bombers of the 39th BAP made a sortie to the area of \u200b\u200bSopotskin (north-west of Grodno), where from a height of 4300 m they dropped 90 FAB-100s on a concentration of German troops (an unusually high bomb load by established standards the use of SB in the Soviet Air Force). (299) Subsequently, these 18 (according to other reports - 17 or 16) SBs were included in the 24th BAP (13th BAD)

and fought as part of the 13th air division until the end of June ... And at the airfields of Pinsk and Zhabchitsy (10 km northwest of Pinsk) throughout the day on June 22, the aircraft of the 39th BAP were systematically destroyed. The first massive raid (Belov in his memoirs estimates the composition of the enemy strike group at 25-30 bombers) was carried out by the Germans at 7.45, while 9 SB aircraft were burned at the Zhabchitsy airfield. At 12.00, the chief of staff of the 39th BAP, Major Altovich, sent a telegram to the Front Air Force Headquarters with the following content: *"During two raids, 14 aircraft were burned. Several cars have holes in their tanks. Pe-2s are all intact. Two people were killed, about ten were injured."* (297) At 13.50 Major Altovich reported another raid on the airfield of the regiment. At 17.00, the front air force headquarters received another message from Pinsk (written in pencil on a telegraph form), but this time it was transmitted not by the regimental chief of staff, but by art. Lieutenant Kulikov: *"The materiel is disabled by 50 percent. Part flew to Bobruisk, 18 aircraft. The personnel of the regiment and the base are preparing the defense of the airfield. We are waiting"*

anti-aircraft (so in the text. - M.S.) means. *We do not have leadership from a higher headquarters.* (298) It is

possible that the final destruction of the materiel of the 39th BAP was prevented by the fighters of the 123rd IAP, which were relocated from the Strigovo airfield to Pinsk in the afternoon of June 22. On the morning of June 23, 10 SBs still remained at the Zhabchitsy airfield. Their further fate is unclear. The fate of 5 (according to other sources - 9) of the latest Pe-2s is just as unclear. If Major Altovich reports that by 12 noon "Pe-2s are all intact", then Colonel General Sandalov (at that time - Colonel, Chief of Staff of the 4th Army) in his monograph on the military operations of the army writes: "About 10 hours in the morning, German aviation also defeated the bomber regiment of the 10th SAD at the airfield in Pinsk, destroying almost all aircraft, including the new Pe-2 bombers, which were not even refueled (6 hours after the announcement of the combat alert. - M.S.) with fuel ". (267)

As always, important touches in the picture of the defeat are made by the report of Comrade Leonov, authorized by the 3rd department for

the 10th SAD, dated June 27, 1941: "... As a result of absent-mindedness (as in the text . - M.S.) aircraft in 39 BAP was destroyed. During the last raid, the SB plane that took off shot down the Junkers-88 enemy plane. Anti-aircraft machine guns at the airfields were inactive. The machine guns on the surviving aircraft were not activated. Between the breaks in the raids, no measures were taken to save the equipment of the aircraft ... The entire flight crew was at the airfields, did nothing, that is, they did not go to the rear and were at a loss, as a result of the fact that there was nothing to fight with (what is the reason here, and what - a consequence?). At the airfields, preparations were mainly made to repulse the proposed landing. Stockpiles of bombs, food, uniforms were not taken to the rear, the bombs were not dispersed ... " (53)

2.7. 22nd of June. Counter attack

The incompleteness of the deployment of Soviet Air Force groupings (in recent years, this beautiful wording is increasingly replacing the old-fashioned "surprise attack") had its positive consequences. In particular, almost the entire second echelon of the Western OVO Air Force (two bomber and one fighter divisions), based on the morning of June 22, 1941 at airfields east of the Berezina and the Dnieper, turned out to be outside the enemy aircraft's kill zone.

The 12th BAD and the 43rd IAD did not suffer even the slightest loss from the "destroying first strike of the Luftwaffe." As for the 13th BAD, it was only late in the evening (at 22.40) that a small group of German bombers raided the Bobruisk airfield (the division's headquarters and numerous units of various air units were based there on June 22), as expected - without fighter cover. In Opersvodka No. 02 of the Air Force Headquarters of the Western Front, this is described as follows: *"The Bobruisk airfield was bombed by four enemy twin-engine aircraft of an unknown type, as a result, the airfield and the headquarters building were damaged. Anti-aircraft artillery shot down one enemy bomber, the rest left. (300)* Most likely, it was this episode that was reflected in the memoirs of the former commander of the 13th air division: *"Seven Junkers attacked the airfield. Two of them were shot down by fire from the ground from the turrets [aircraft], two were set on fire by some of our fighter pilots who were in the air on the I-153. All four bombers crashed near the airfield." (301)*

In the dead of night (at 1.15 a.m.) another raid was made on the Bobruisk airfield, as a result of which a Su-2 light bomber was destroyed on the ground. (302) According to M. Timin, another SB was lost at the airfield in the 24th BAP (13th BAP). Be that as it may, the ground losses of the "second echelon" air units turned out to be negligible and had practically no effect on the combat capability of the units. Moreover, the 3rd Air Corps of the Long-Range Aviation, whose airfields were located southeast of

Smolensk. Thus, the forces for delivering a retaliatory strike on enemy airfields were theoretically available.

Of course, there were plans drawn up even before the war to deliver such a blow. The action plan of the aviation of the Western OVO during the period of covering the mobilization and deployment, as well as the plans for covering all other border districts, assumed *"successive strikes by combat aviation on the established bases and airfields of the enemy, as well as combat operations in the air to destroy enemy aircraft and from the very first days war to gain air supremacy.* The difference between the Western OVO lies only in the fact that the declassified and accessible to historians text of the "Plan for the use of the district air force" also indicates the planned outfit of forces: *"Based on the tasks set and the presence of a bomber*

aviation, parts of the district air force can solve the following tasks:

a) inflict a simultaneous strike on the established enemy airfields and bases located in the first zone, up to the line of Insterburg (now Chernyakhovsk), Allenstein (now Olsztyn), Mława, Warsaw, Deblin, covering the actions of bomber aircraft with fighter aircraft. To accomplish this task, 138 links will be required, we have 142 links, i.e., using all available bomber aircraft, we can solve this problem simultaneously; b) with a second sortie of bomber aircraft, strike at enemy airfields and bases located in the second zone up to the

Königsberg, Marienburg, Thorn, Lodz line. For this purpose, aircraft of the type SB, PE-2, AR-2, of which we have 122 links, can be used, 132 links are required to solve this problem, 10 links are missing. Fighter aircraft cannot escort the bombers during this task, their range of action does not allow ... " (303) Unfortunately, the annexes to the Plan and specific tasks for the air divisions are still not available, and we do not know how many airfields and bases were "established" and from what calculation did the figure come out of 138 units (i.e., a little

more than 400 aircraft), the simultaneous strike of which was considered sufficient to defeat enemy aircraft in the 100-km strip west of the border. If

guided by our current knowledge, then an attack by 400 aircraft on 20 main airfields based on the 2nd Air Force of the Luftwaffe could be very tangible - of course, if you strike in the "German style", i.e. from a strafing flight, approach after approach, raid after raid ... On June 22, 1941, just a few hours after

the start of hostilities, radical changes were required to be made to the pre-war plans for the use of bomber aviation on the Western Front. First of all, because it became impossible to "cover the actions of bomber aviation with fighter aircraft" - the fighter regiments of the 11th, 9th and 10th air divisions, even in the best case, fought desperately for self-preservation. At worst, they have already ceased to exist as a controlled, capable combat unit. Secondly, the war did not start at all according to the plans of the Soviet leadership, the enemy ground troops built crossings over the border Bug (or simply crossed it along unexploded bridges), and the command of the Western Front faced a very difficult question about the priorities in setting the tasks of the Front Air Force: is it worth to carry out the previously planned operation to suppress enemy aircraft at "established airfields and bases", or should we immediately switch to direct fire support of our ground forces? An unequivocal answer to such a question can hardly be formulated even today, even by high-level military specialists, because everything depends on an assessment of the potential

and real capabilities of the Red Army troops. Theoretically, in order to destroy a ferry crossing, located practically on the line of contact between troops, there is no need to "drive" an expensive and scarce bomber over a distance of 400 km from Bobruisk to the Bug - this task can and should be solved by field artillery, and the most massive, divisional link. In the end, military aviation was invented not to replace a cheap gun with something very expensive, but to solve problems that artillery cannot solve in principle. For example, for the bombing of airfields located at a distance of more than 20 - 30 km from the front line.

Everything changes if we move from abstract schemes to tragic reality on June 22: a wave of insane chaos was already rolling from the line

border pillars to the east, followed by a still armed crowd of former Red Army soldiers. In such a situation, the intention of the front command to use the one located in the deep rear, i.e., seems quite reasonable. maintaining controllability and combat capability, aviation for solving purely tactical tasks, turning it into a kind of "emergency aid". In practice, everything happened as follows.

At 9.00 on June 22, the commander of the Air Force of the Western Front, Major General Ivan Kopets, signed for the text of the Directive of the People's Commissar of Defense No. 2 (*"air strikes to the depth of German territory up to 100-150 km"*), and at 9.30 in the morning, 5 hours after the actual start of the war, at the headquarters of the Air Force of

the front, Combat Order No. 01 was signed: *"1. German troops and aircraft violated our border and raided our ground units and civilian cities. His Air Force raided Grodno, Volkovysk, Lida and other points. Weather in the area of action - cloudiness 3*

- 4 points. 2. On the right, PribOVO aviation operates, on the left - KOVO. 3. The Air Force of the Western Front has the task of destroying enemy aircraft in the areas of Suwalki and Terespol (west of Brest. - M.S.), columns and concentration of enemy troops in the area of the Suwalki ledge in the period

22 - 23.6.41 . 1) 9th, 10th, 11th SAD to act on the instructions of the

army air force commanders. 2) 13 BADs during the period of 22.6.41 to destroy the tank column that had broken through in the Tsekhanovets sector (a border village 45 km southwest of Velsk). With one regiment, destroy the enemy grouping in the area: Rygol, Mikashuvka, Mustard [33] (all points near the border in the Suwalki ledge).

3) 97 BAP (this regiment of the 13th air division was armed with Su-2 close-range bombers) to betray the commander of the 9th SAD, putting him [at the airfield] Kuryany (7 km southeast

of Bialystok). 4) 3rd DBAK during 22 - 23.6.41, destroy the accumulation of troops Suwalki, Pshasnysh (75 km west of Lomzha). Destroy the Warsaw and Königsberg aircraft

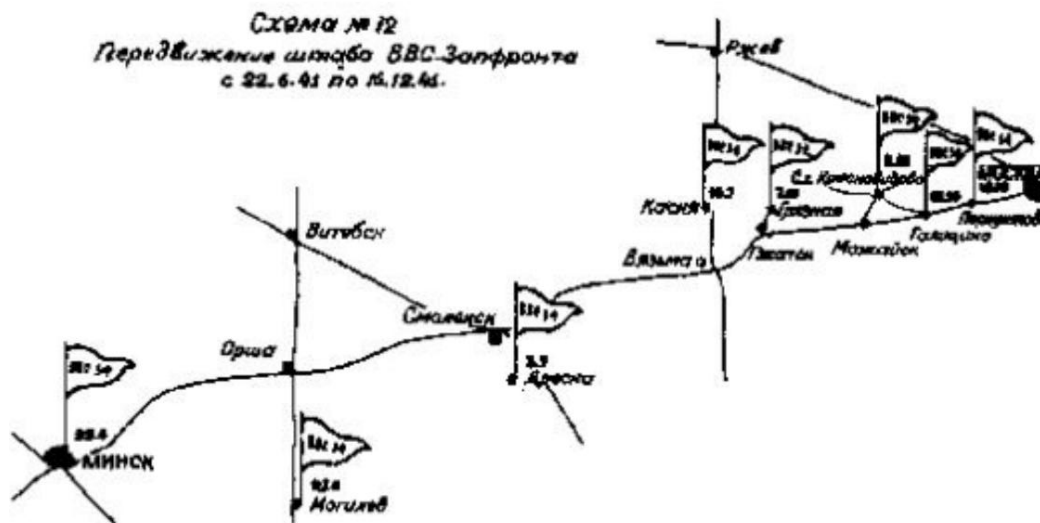
factories with night raids. 5) 212 DBAP during 22 - 23.6.41 by night raids destroy the Koenigsberg aircraft factories.

6) 12 dietary supplements in two shelves during the day on 22.6.41 to destroy enemy tank grouping in the area of the Suwalki ledge.

7) 3 TBAP single night raids destroy warehouses in the area of Suwalki and the Suwalki ledge. 8) 1 TBAP single night raids

destroy aircraft materiel at the airfields Sokoluv (30 km north of Siedlce), Siedlce, Lukow (30 km south of Siedlce), Biala Podlaska. 4. My command post is the headquarters of the Air Force of the Northern Fleet, Minsk. Commander of the Air Force of the Western Front, Major General Kopets.

Deputy early Headquarters of the Zapfront Air Force, Colonel Taranenko. (304)



Schematic map of the relocation of the headquarters of the Air Force of the Western Front (Appendix to the report of the Air Force Headquarters of the Western Front for 1941)

As you can see, very active combat work was planned in all directions and with a variety of tasks. It is unlikely that at that moment General Kopets was thinking about suicide ... Alas, a clear designation of the main task in the order is not visible, it was supposed to "distribute earrings to all sisters." At 9 o'clock in the morning, the compilers of the order remained captive to the same erroneous ideas about the grouping and plans of the enemy, which ideas predetermined the content of Directive No. 3 of the People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR, signed at 9 pm on June 22, namely: Suwalki group, and

the breakthrough of Guderian's 2nd Panzer Group from Brest to Kobrin, which had become quite clear in the evening, was still perceived as an auxiliary, diverting blow. Accordingly, the main point of application of the efforts of the Air Force of the Western Front was to become the "Suwalk ledge".

Another reconnaissance mistake was the non-existent "tank column in the Tsekhanovets sector", to combat which it was supposed to use the largest bomber division in the Front Air Force (and by the evening of June 22, to combat the "German tank division that had broken through to Belsk", they also attracted the most powerful in the front of the 6th mechanized corps). The attack on the airfields based on the Luftwaffe was supposed to be delivered only on the night of June 23 (i.e., obviously not aimed), with the forces of only one heavy bomber regiment. Significant results could hardly be expected from this, especially considering that out of the four points indicated in the order, two (Sokoluv and Lukow) did not have German air units. It is noteworthy and strange that from the

detailed order, detailing the tasks to the level of individual regiments, an entire division, the 43rd IAD, completely "dropped out". Of course, about the existence of the division, i.e. four fighter regiments fully equipped with aircraft and pilots were not forgotten at the Front Air Force Headquarters. The former commander of the 43rd IAD himself in his memoirs describes the circumstances of receiving the order as follows: *"... It had long since dawned when the call came*

from the district aviation headquarters. It was, from memory, between five and six in the morning. The district air force commander called: "We are being bombed.

There is no connection with Chernykh and

Ganichev ... This was the first message about the beginning of the war that I heard. Kopets spoke in an even voice, and it seemed to me that he spoke too leisurely. I was silent.

- Cover Minsk with two shelves. One is Baranovich. Another one is

Pukhovichi. It was an order. I answered properly when the order was understood and accepted. Didn't ask questions. Kopets was silent, although I thought he should say something else. But he only spoke one word: "Go ahead." (238)

Operational report No. 01 of the front air force headquarters dated 12.00 on June 22 confirms that the memory of General Zakharov did not fail: *"43 IAD was relocated to airfields - 160 IAP, 39 aircraft, Loshchitsa, 161 IAP, 40 aircraft, Slep'yanka (these are two airfields in the suburbs of Minsk. - M.S.), 163 IAP, Pukhovichi (railway station 65 km southeast of Minsk), 162 IAP, 36 aircraft, Baranovichi; the task is to cover Baranovichi, Minsk"[34] . (305)* Judging by the indicated number of aircraft, the redeployment was not yet fully completed by noon. Evening Opersvodka No. 02 states: *"43 IAD covered Minsk with two regiments and Baranovichi with two regiments. She had no meetings with the enemy, she had no losses. (300)* In fact, it turned out that four fighter regiments were inactive on the first, hottest day of the fight in the air. From the standpoint of this afterthought, the decision of the front air force commander may seem like a gross mistake, but from the point of view of pre-war ideas about the huge expected number of enemy aircraft, the intention to cover Minsk and Baranovichi with large forces of fighter aircraft, i.e. the present and future location of the front headquarters seems to be quite justified. Be that as it may, but now the bomber regiments had to operate without

any fighter cover: the fighters of the "first echelon" were tied to their airfields by the enemy, and the fighters of the 43rd IAD - by order of the commander. In the current situation, the bombers could only rely on blind luck. However, the chances of him were not so small. Recall that in the vast space of the offensive zone of the Army Group Center, the Germans had only 315 single-engine fighters in good condition, and they could not provide such forces with continuous patrols in the air, from dawn to dusk of the longest day of the year. In addition, a significant part of the combat-ready fighters of the 2nd Air Force of the Luftwaffe was repeatedly involved in assault strikes on Soviet airfields, which further reduced the likelihood of a meeting of red-star bombers with enemy fighters.

Alas, not everyone is lucky in this "Russian roulette".

*"Combat report No. 1, headquarters 13 BAD,
Bobruisk. 1. The courses of the commanders of the 13 BADs, consisting
of 19 SBs at 10.45 22.6 bombarded the mountains. Kosuv. H=900 meters.
Mission accomplished. Direct hits noted. Dropped 114
FAB-100. 2. When falling off the target at 10.55 N = 900 meters in the area
Sterdyn was attacked by 20 Me-109s. Trophies (as in the text) 4 Me-109.
3. At 10.45 from H=900 the movement of tanks from Kosuv to Hyp was
noticed (the number was not
established). 4. Losses: 18 SBs, of which 4 SBs landed on their territory
in the Kobyla area east of Kosuv, 22 kilometers. 1 crew returned. 5.
Weather ... Chief
of Staff of*

*the 13th BAD Lieutenant Colonel Telnov. (300) This is how
this tragic episode is described in the dispassionate language of an
operational document. In the memoirs of the commander of the 13th BAD,
General Polynin, more vivid pictures were preserved: "...*

*Major Nikiforov slowly got out of the cockpit (head of division courses
for flight commanders. - M.S.). He looked terrible: his eyes were bloodshot,
his face was pale, his lips were blue. He was so shocked that for several
minutes he could not utter a word.*

*"Tell me what happened," I ask him, anticipating that a big disaster has
happened. "They beat them... They beat
everyone," he stared blankly at the ground. I rarely changed the
presence of the spirit, but then I was taken aback. - How is everyone? I
ask the*

*pilot. Navigator approached
crew, smoothed the sweat-drenched strands of hair and added:*

*Not all, of course, but many. Sit anywhere. Who is in the field, and who
is behind the front line ...*

*" (301) In the same battle that took place in the sky over Kosuv, 8
bombers of the 24th Red Banner BAP were also shot down. Two squadrons
of this regiment (21 SB in total) at about the same time as Major Nikiforov's
two nines tried to detect a non-existent enemy tank column in the area of
Tsekhanovets, and since they could not find it, they bombed from a height of
1800 m on a cluster of German troops in the area of \u200b\u200bthe towns
of Kamenchik and Malkinya-*

Gurna (both on the banks of the Bug, 20 km east and 15 km north of Kosuv). (40)

There were no German tanks there, but only 20 km southwest of Kosuv was the Staraves airfield, where the 1st fighter group of the JG-51 squadron was based. Judging by the list of victories declared by the German fighters, two squadrons of "Messers » of this group and one squadron of the 2nd group (Sedlec airfield). The Germans claimed 31 downed bombers, which, unfortunately, was not too strong an exaggeration (in total, 26 SBs from the 24th BAP and KKZ did not return from the mission, including those who landed on an emergency landing). The highly experienced aces of the 51st squadron successfully increased their personal lists of victories, in particular, G. Hofmeier reported on four downed aircraft; he also turned out to be the only fighter whose aircraft was damaged in that battle.

In accordance with the order of the commander of the 13th BAD, the bombers of the 24th BAP, after completing the mission, were supposed to land on the Zhabchitsy airfield near Pinsk (i.e., relocate closer to the front line), but the six surviving SBs under the command of Captain Lozenko preferred to return to the airfield Teikichi (15 km northeast of Bobruisk), and only 7 aircraft landed at the Zhabchitsy airfield. Let us immediately note that

this seven turned out the only subdivision of the bomber aviation of the Western Front, which on June 22, 1941 completed two sorties. Having coped with the understandable shock of the first meeting with German fighters, the bombers, led by the deputy commander of the 24th BAP for political affairs, battalion commissar Kalinin, again went to the Tsekhanovets area, where from a height of 1400 m they bombed at the concentration of Wehrmacht infantry that had crossed the Bug. As you know, "a bold bullet is afraid", and this sortie did without meetings with enemy fighters.

One SB was hit by anti-aircraft fire and made an emergency landing on still Soviet territory. Three other

bomber regiments of the 13th BAD (121st, 125th and 130th) began combat operations with a noticeable delay. Closer to noon, three nines of the 121st BAP took off. According

on a mission, they bombed the concentration of enemy ground troops in the Losice, Sarnaki, Konstantinuv triangle (50 km east of Siedlce). From a high altitude (from 4000 to 4700 meters), i.e. not too targeted, 60 FAB-100s and 102 FAB-50s were dropped. One of the three squadrons, without encountering enemy fighters, returned to the Bobruisk airfield without loss. (307) The other two divisions were less fortunate.

The 2nd air squadron of the 121st BAP in the target area was attacked (according to the reports of the crews) by four Me-109 fighters. One bomber caught fire in the air, the rest were able to get out of the battle and at 14.10 return to the Novaya Serebryanka airfield. The 5th air squadron was attacked and almost completely destroyed by a large group of German fighters (according to the reports of the crews - 9 Me-109 and Me-110 aircraft, in fact they were fighters of two squadrons of the 4th group of the JG-51 squadron from the Krzhevica airfield). The result of this meeting in Opersvodka No. 01 of the headquarters of the 121st BAP is described as follows: *"Two SB aircraft, having caught fire over the territory of the enemy, planned for their territory, and five aircraft that began to lag behind were pulled to their territory across the Bug River. Due to the attacks of enemy fighters, it was not*

possible to observe our aircraft ... " (307) We have to state with bitterness that the heavy losses suffered by the above-mentioned air units of the 13th BAD turned out to be largely meaningless - the bombing attacks were carried out on third-rate targets (if not in an open field), while the columns of tank and motorized divisions of the 2nd TGr of the Wehrmacht, who were crowded at the crossings over the Bug in the Brest region at precisely this time, avoided exposure from the air. And against this background, it would seem that the

actions of the 130th BAP could have been crowned with serious success. This regiment received the task from the commander of the 13th BAD to *"destroy the materiel, warehouses, ammunition at the airfields of Biala Podlaska."* Such an airfield really existed, and the headquarters and the 1st air group of the StG-77 dive bomber squadron were based on it. The clumsy Ju-87 was not even outwardly similar to a fighter, even less capable of resisting a bomber raid in reality. To hit on

Three nines of the Security Council were raised at the Byala Podlyaska airfield, and one of them was led by the commander of the 130th BAP, Major Krivoshapko, the other, by his deputy Captain Kolomyichenko. (40) 162 high-explosive bombs FAB-100 flew to meet their potential victims. What happened next in the target area can serve as another clear example that refutes the carefully crafted myth about the supposedly inevitable effectiveness of a strike on airfields.

At 13.15, Soviet bombers appeared in the sky over Byala Podlaska, appeared at an altitude of 5 km, which already made it impossible for any targeted bombing (it is doubtful that from such a height it was even possible to notice the planes camouflaged on the edge of the airfield). The German airfield did not sleep and met the attackers with dense anti-aircraft fire - and this despite the fact that the StG 77 squadron "settled" Biala Podlaska not for a year and a half, but for about a week and a half. The German anti-aircraft gunners failed to shoot down the bombers, but the formation of the aircraft was disrupted, and the accuracy of the bombing attack decreased even more. As a result, "the mountain gave birth to a mouse", and the 27 SB raid ended for the Germans with the loss of one Fw-58 trainer (another machine of this type was damaged) ^[35]

With the departure of the strike group from the target, the most important thing began. It is not entirely clear how German fighters could appear over Byala Podlaska at such a pace - no matter how magnificent the performance characteristics of the MecepmMHTT-109F for its time, it took just over 5 minutes to climb 5 km. 5 minutes is 300 seconds, and during this time, the SB could, without forcing the engines, move away from the bombing target by 30-35 km; in addition, the Germans (and fighters from II / JG-51 from the Sedlec airfield and I / JG-53 from the Krzewica airfield took part in the battle) still had to overcome 40 - 60 km from the take-off site to Byala Podlaska. Most likely, the German ground posts of the VNOS found the planes of the 130th BAP still over the Bug and immediately called in fighters. The final result is 20

SBs shot down (in the report of the Luftwaffe pilots, there were already 32 of them). Senior German commanders also took part in that ill-fated battle: Werner Mölders himself reported on three downed bombers (by the way, this was not the first flight for the squadron commander on June 22), and III / JG-51 commander Richard Leppla announced two victories. The seven survivors who returned to their airfield

crews of the 130th BAP (the regiment commander was among the dead) reported 9 downed enemy fighters, which, unfortunately, had nothing to do with reality. (40)

But the pilots of the 125th BAP that day were surprisingly lucky. In accordance with the task, they went on a long-range raid from the Minki airfield (between the Berezina and the Dnieper) to objects in the "Suwalk ledge", which was literally stuffed with Luftwaffe fighter units. As in the rest of the regiments of the 13th BAD, 27 SB went on the first sortie, and the regiment commander himself led them into battle; as in all other cases, there was no fighter cover at all. The bombers of the 125th BAP loaded heavier than the others (8 bombs for each combat vehicle) and struck from a height of 1200 meters (as an attentive reader may have noticed, such a low bombing height is not often found in the description of Soviet aviation events). According to the reports of the crews, numerous fires appeared in the target area. (40) It remains only to figure out

where exactly these 162 FAB-100s and 54 FAB-50s were dropped. The task demanded *"to destroy the enemy troops in the Rygol area, Servy Lake"* (30 km southeast of Suwalki, almost at the very border). The enemy was undoubtedly there - on that day it was difficult to find a place free from the accumulation of German troops in the strip between Suwalki and the border. However, in the report of the regiment commander, an attack on the airfield (!) Of the enemy is stated, and the Germans themselves note the bombardment of the Berzhniki airfield, which took place at 13.10 (Berlin time), which was located about 20 km from the Rygol, Lake Servy

strip. What was it? A navigational error, as a result of which the bombers of the 125th BAP ended up over the German airfield? Or was it some other group of Soviet aircraft that struck the Berzhniki? Be that as it may, both sides suffered only minimal losses. One training aircraft was destroyed at the Berzhniki airfield, but the German fighters from the II / JG-27 group based there were able to raise only two links to repel the raid, the actions of which turned out to be ineffective (perhaps, the effect was relatively low - in comparison with the elite squadron Mölders - the qualification of the pilots of the group, which was prepared for assault strikes on

ground targets). Two SBs, damaged presumably by anti-aircraft fire, made an emergency landing east of the front line. One gunner-radio operator was killed in the air, two were wounded. The fifth bomber

regiment of the 13th air division (97th BAP) was re-equipped with the "newest" Su-2 under-bomber, of which there were 35 units in the regiment by the beginning of the war. (199) The order of the commander of the 13th BAD (*"97th BBAP to conduct training flights at the Bobruisk airfield. Be ready by 18.00. 22.6.41 to relocate to the Kuryany airfield"*) was not carried out (or was canceled in a timely manner), and the regiment remained in its former base area (airfields of the Bobruisk air hub).

The 12th bomber division (command and headquarters at the Vitebsk airfield) also included five air regiments, but in terms of real combat capability, they were, as they say, "one more beautiful than the other." The 6th BAP (judging by the number, the "old" personnel aviation regiment) was in the process of preparation - either for reorganization, or for disbandment[36]. The regiment included 72 pilots, 62 navigators and 73 gunner-radio operators, but at the same time only 25 crews were considered combat-ready, and there were 18 combat aircraft (all SBs). (199) The

43rd BAP and the 209th BAP were in the process of being re-equipped with Su-2s, which by June 22 had received 25 and 15 units, respectively. In addition, the 43rd BAP still had 46 RZETs (a hopelessly outdated reconnaissance biplane, the use of which as a light bomber, if possible, only with reliable fighter cover). The 215th BAP, although it was, judging by the name, "bomber", was armed with 15 I-15bis biplanes and, according to the pre-war plans of the KA Air Force command, was to be re-equipped with the Il-2 attack aircraft in the 4th quarter of 1941. In all these regiments, there was a significant oversupply of flight personnel, who had nothing to fly on. The only relatively well-equipped regiment in the 12th BAD could be considered the 128th BAP, which was armed with 41 SB bombers (there were significantly more crews - 68, of which only 31 were "combat-ready", however). (199) At 7.55 on June 22, the division headquarters received the so-called. Preliminary Order No. 01 of the

Headquarters of the Air Force of the Front, in accordance with which

it was supposed to *"destroy the accumulation of troops in the Rudavka, Mikashuvka area (which is 20 km from / to Augustow) with two regiments, the 128th and 43rd. Destroy the warehouses on the eastern outskirts of Suwalki. Landing after the strike 128 BAP - Golovsk, 43 BAP - Kuropolye (both points in the Postavy area - M.S.). 209 BAP to be ready to relocate the Teklinopol area. 215 BAP to be ready to relocate to the Leishche airfield (i.e., to the airfield of the 127th IAP 11th SAD. - M.S.) . "* (308) An hour and a half later, the above-mentioned Combat Order No. 01 of the commander of the Air Force of the Western Front confirmed the task of the division: *"With two regiments during the day on 22.6.41, destroy the enemy's tank grouping in the area of the Suwalki ledge."*

In fact, the 128th BAP and the so-called took part in the hostilities of the first day of the war. "consolidated group" of the 6th BAP. The first squadron of the 128th regiment took off at 12.00 from the Ulla airfield and, covering a distance of 400 km, dropped 54 FAB-100s from a height of 1500 m on the village of Kzhive (an eastern suburb of Suwalki). According to intelligence, there was a large German warehouse there, but literally 3-4 km south of Kzhive was the Sobolevo airfield, on which three (!) Luftwaffe fighter groups (III / JG-53, II / JG-52 and III / JG- 27). By an incredible coincidence, neither Soviet bombers noticed from a height of 1.5 km an airfield packed with planes, nor German fighters had time to respond to the appearance of nine SBs (I give the reader the opportunity to independently choose the most plausible version explaining this incident).

Also, without encounters with enemy fighters, the flight to the same area of the 3rd squadron of the regiment ended, only one aircraft was damaged by anti-aircraft fire, but was able to reach the Kuropolye airfield (12 km north of Postavy), where it made an emergency landing with retracted landing gear. And this was the only combat loss of the regiment - the rest of the squadron returned to the base in full strength, dropping a bomb load (in particular, 18 heavy FAB-250s) on the accumulation of German troops near the village of Mikaszowka. It is difficult to name the exact number of sorties of the regiment - in the documents of the division headquarters one can read about 27 and 39, and the summation of the data given by M. Timin on the basis of the report of the headquarters of the 128th BAP gives an amount of 45 sorties - more than in any - any other bomber regiment.

Western Front. By 4 p.m., the regiment concentrated on the airfields of the Postavy hub (Golovsk and Kuropolye), having lost, in addition to the above-mentioned, one more SB, which received minor damage during landing.



Soviet light bomber Su-2

The phenomenal luck of the crews of the 128th BAP did not extend, alas, to the "consolidated group" of the 6th BAP. This group gathered for a long time, and as a result, over the target - a German mechanized column in the Sopotskin area (22 km north of Grodno) - nine SBs appeared only at 17.24. The standard load (6 FAB-100 for each aircraft) was dropped from a height of 2 km, according to the report of the crews, direct hits were noted. Apparently, by that time, the Luftwaffe command was worried about the repeated raids by Soviet bombers and organized dense patrols of fighters in the air. When moving away from the target, the aircraft of the 6th BAP were attacked by a group of "Messers" from II / JG-27. After the battle, German pilots claimed one SB shot down, but in fact the losses were even greater: the second bomber crashed to the ground in the Grodno region, the crew managed to escape by parachute. (40) The last burst of combat activity of

the 12th BAD occurred at sunset. From the headquarters of the Air Force of the front, a message was received about the "parachute landing" of the enemy, which landed at 16.20 50 km north of the city of Lida. Unlike hundreds of other similar "landing forces" that landed on the pages of operational reports of those days, this

turned out to be extremely large - 1000 people! The command of the 12th BAD was tasked with destroying the landing force with the forces of the 128th regiment, and even with the involvement of the 163rd fighter regiment from the 43rd IAD. Everything, however, was limited to the departure at 20.00 of four RZETs from the 43rd BAP to the area of \u200b\u200bthe alleged "landing". The inaction of the 128th BAP in the combat report of the headquarters of the 12th BAP was explained by the fact that the regiment *"recharges and brings combat readiness."* (309)

In the afternoon of June 22, the 3rd DBAC joined the actions of front-line aviation. It was a serious force: "three and a half" regiments (96th, 98th, 212th and emerging 207th), one and a half hundred serviceable long-range bombers DB-3f, a high level of training of flight crews. Unfortunately, there was no time for careful preparation of sorties, reconnaissance of targets, and organization of interaction with fighter aircraft. On the telegram sent at 15.20 by the chief of staff of the 3rd DBAK to the front air force headquarters (*"is the area of operation of the air corps covered by your fighter aircraft, at what heights of the regiments will they be in the target area from 16.30 to 18.30"*), it is written obliquely in black pencil: "Fighters we can't cover." (310) In addition, at noon on June 22 in Smolensk, 600 km from the border, they still did not represent the scale of the defeat that occurred in the air units of the "first echelon" of the

Air Force of the Western Front, and therefore retained some hopes for possible assistance from their fighter aviation. The corps commander, Colonel N. Skripko (who lived to see the Victory and became an air marshal), in his very informative (and within the known limitations of the era - true) memoirs, writes: *"In the border zone, the flight route passed through the airfields of our fighter aviation, which made it easier to meet with fighters, just in case they still accompany us to the goal; at the same time, this presented an opportunity to cut off enemy fighters during the return of our aircraft after bombing."* (311) Alas, by the time the bombers of the 98th DBAP took off from the Shatalovo airfield, there were no more red-star fighters in the Pruzhany, Byala Podlaska zone ...

The 31st crew of the 98th DBAP in separate small groups (and even single planes!) in the period from 16.50 to 18.17 delivered a series of attacks on the accumulation of enemy ground troops in the area of Lukov, Sedlec, Janow, Biala Podlaska. The section of the railway from Biala Podlaska to Deblin was also bombed. Numerous Luftwaffe airfields located in the same area were not included in the list of targets - which, however, did not save the bombers of the 98th DBAP from turning them into a target for attack by fighters from JG-51 and JG-53. The unfortunate tactic of "flying in small groups" (in the hope that in this way it will be possible to reduce the likelihood of detection and encounter with enemy fighters) if it could have any positive effect, then certainly not in the case of a daytime flight to the base area of five fighter regiments enemy.

In total, from 16.10 to 17.45 Berlin time, German pilots announced 13 downed bombers (fighters of the squadron headquarters and the 1st group JG-53 claimed 8 victories, V. Mölders's subordinates claimed five downed aircraft). Real losses were somewhat smaller. In total, 12 aircraft did not return to the Shatalovo airfield, but not all of them were shot down. In particular, three aircraft received minor damage and were able to safely reach the Bobruisk airfield (their landing on the evening of June 22 was noted in the documents of the headquarters of the 13th BAD). (40) And Marshal Skripko, in his memoirs, without indicating, however, specific figures, also notes that *"of the aircraft attributed by the headquarters to combat losses, the next day some of them returned."* The members of the crews of bombers damaged in battle also returned, who managed to pull over the front line and land on an emergency one - do not forget that, despite its name, the 3rd Long-Range Aviation Corps on the first day of the war operated on objects located no further than 30 - 50 km from the border, and only 5-10 minutes separated the downed plane from the rescue landing on its territory. As in the case of combat raids by front-

line aviation aircraft, the bombers of the 3rd DBAK operating in the area of the "Suwalk ledge" had significantly fewer encounters with enemy fighters and losses:

“Operational report No. 1 by 3.00 23.6. 41, headquarters of 3 AK, Smolensk. ...2. 207DBAP in the period 15.40 to 15.44, consisting of 9 crews in units from H 1000-1600 m, bombed the enemy’s motorized column, the head of which approached the Merkina, the tail - the Leytuns (these, most likely, were units of the 3rd Wehrmacht tank group advancing towards the Neman. - M.S.), direct hits on the convoy were noted. There are no losses. Landing at your own airfield (Borovskoye).

3. 96 DBAP from 16.35 to 18.40, consisting of 29 crews H 1200-1500 m, bombed enemy mechanized columns advancing along the highway and highways in the area of \u200b\u200bSejny, Suwalki, Augustow, Kvitsemotis. Over the target, all links were fired on FOR, one link was attacked by a link of Me-109 fighters, one

fighter was shot down. Losses of the regiment: one plane burned down at the airfield during an emergency landing after takeoff, the crew is alive; one plane, according to the report of the observing crews, burned down 12 km west of Grodno, one downed plane was forced to land in the Leiptuna area, one plane left with a decrease in the area ... ”(further - text-break) [37]. (312)

German fighters from the 8th Air Corps, carried away by the very successful “hunt” for ground targets that day, once again missed these raids. The losses of the 96th DBAP were most likely associated with the actions of the fighter squadron JG-54 from the 1st Air Force of the Luftwaffe. Pilots of Group II/JG-54 tripled their success by claiming 11 Soviet bombers shot down. However, in addition to those shot down irretrievably in the 96th DBAP, there were also seriously damaged vehicles. As Skripko writes, *“many planes returned damaged, there were wounded, killed; one full-time ambulance was not enough, and airborne trucks had to be used to transport the wounded ... ”* (311) In total, on the day of June 22, 1941, bombers of the 3rd DBAK carried out 69 sorties, 51 FAB-250 were dropped on mechanized convoys and concentrations of

enemy troops and 510 FAB-100 (on average, this gives 923 kg of bomb load per aircraft, which is 1.5 times more than the typical load of SB or Ar-2 aircraft).

The arithmetic result of the actions of the Soviet bomber aviation on June 22, 1941 in the Western Front is presented in

the following table:

Таблица 10

		Число самолетов	Число вылетов	Потери в воздухе
11-я САД	16-й БАП	60	0 (?)	3 (?)
9-я САД	13-й БАП	59	0 (?)	0 (?)
10-я САД	39-й БАП	48	18	0
12-я САД	6-й БАП	18	9	2
	128-й БАП	41	39 (?)	1
13-я САД	24-й БАП	41	28	9
	97-й БАП	35	0	0
	121-й БАП	56	27	8
	125-й БАП	38	27	2
	130-й БАП	38	27	20

		Число самолетов	Число вылетов	Потери в воздухе
3-й ДБАК	ККЗ	19 (?)	19	18
	96-й ДБАП	50	29	3—10 (?)
	98-й ДБАП	70	31	9
	207-й ДБАП	16	9	0
	212-й ДБАП	61	0	0
ВСЕГО :		650	263	72—82

Notes: - the
 regiments of the 12th BAD (43rd, 209th and 215th), which were in the stage
 of re-equipment, were
 not taken into account; - the number of aircraft includes all combat vehicles, including
 temporarily out of order; -
 the number of losses includes all cases of forced landings, but does not
 include accidents and catastrophes that occurred without the influence of the enemy.

The very first conclusion that can be drawn from these data is that the intensity (let us keep silent about efficiency for now) of the use of available bomber aviation forces was very low. Even taking into account the fact that by the morning of June 22, about 20% of the aircraft were out of order, the average stress of combat work was 1 sortie for 2 serviceable aircraft. Even if we exclude from the general list four regiments that for various reasons did not take part in the hostilities at all (the 13th and 16th regiments were defeated on the ground, and the 97th and 212th regiments did not receive the corresponding order), then even with such an assessment, the tension will be about 3 sorties for 5 serviceable aircraft. Only in one regiment (the 128th BAP) practically every serviceable aircraft made one sortie. Only one group of 7 bombers of the 24th BAP performed two sorties per day. The enemy was much more active that day...

There were also objective reasons for such a low intensity. The first and most obvious of them is the deployment of units that had taken shape by the morning of June 22 (namely, "established", and not created in accordance with the plan and order): with the exception of three regiments of the "first echelon", all bomber units were on a huge (from 400 to 600 km) away from the border. Yes, theoretically, this did not exclude the possibility of performing both two and three sorties (light day in June lasts 17-18 hours), but neither flight crews nor ground services were prepared for such work (I remind you that in peacetime a training raid in 15 - 18 hours per month could be considered an excellent indicator in the bomber regiments of the Soviet Air Force). Secondly, the refusal to act in strict accordance with pre-war plans and hasty improvisation in setting tasks led to the fact that the actual combat operations of bomber aircraft could only begin in the afternoon.

And here we turn to the issue of evaluating the effectiveness of 263 sorties made. Task number one - the destruction of enemy aircraft at airfields - was completed to the "deuce" (two enemy training aircraft and not a single combat aircraft were destroyed on the ground). With rare exceptions, the bombers of the Air Force of the Front and the Air Force, with rare exceptions, did not even begin to solve problem number two - an attack on the mechanized columns of German tank divisions; only 9 sorties of the 207th DBAP were crowned with a bombing attack on the columns of the

TGr at Merkin, in other cases, bombs were dropped on concentrations of German infantry, random settlements, crossings across the Bug in secondary sectors of the front. Guderian's tank group, judging by the geography of the actions of Soviet bombers, was completely spared from any noticeable impact from the air. Of course, all this was not the fault of the flight crews, who, to the best of their ability, tried to fulfill the hasty and ill-conceived tasks assigned to them.

The statistics of aircraft losses also deserves attention. The losses are very heavy (29% of the number of sorties), but nothing in common with the "total extermination of clumsy Soviet bombers" repeatedly stated in pseudo-historical literature is visible in the real picture of the events of the first day of the war.

Almost all of the bombers were shot down by enemy fighters - a completely predictable result of flying into a "hornet's nest" without being accompanied by their own fighters. Another thing that is not so obvious is the huge difference in the level of losses (ie, the effectiveness of German fighters). On the northern flank of the front, 8 (maximum - 15) bombers were lost on 119 sorties, on the southern flank - 64 out of 150. The losses of two units (courses of flight commanders of the 13th BAD and three squadrons of the 130th BAP) turned out to be more than the losses of all the rest taken together. On the contrary, the 128th BAP, which completed the largest number of sorties, suffered minimal combat losses.

These figures, paradoxical at first glance, are just another manifestation of the general rule: in the "pre-doctor era" no "quality" of fighters (aircraft and pilots) could compensate for the lack of their number. The meeting of opponents in the sky was a random event, and the probability of this event depended to the smallest extent on speed, rate of climb, turn time and other aerodynamic tricks; everything was determined by the tactics of use, the presence of a large number of fighters, which makes it possible to ensure at least periodic patrolling of at least the most likely areas for the appearance of enemy bombers and, to a large extent

blind luck. On June 22, as on all other days of the war, luck was distributed very unevenly ...

2.8. Dark secrets

It is much more difficult to sum up the results of the day on June 22 in relation to the fighter regiments of the "first echelon" of the Air Force of the Western Front - the documentation of units and formations is largely lost, always extremely contradictory, often drawn up in hindsight and with a clearly visible goal to find (or invent) "objective reasons" unprecedented destruction. Nevertheless, by no means claiming to solve this "squaring of the circle", we will try to systematize the crumbs of information that were given in the previous paragraphs. The result is presented in the following table:

Таблица 11

	Было к 22.6.41	Сбиты в воз- духе	Уничтоже- но и по- вреждено на земле	В т.ч. при первом налете	Оста- ток к утру 23.6	Судьба неиз- вестна
122-й ИАП	69	4 (?)	21	8	17	27
127-й ИАП	70	12	0	0	33	25
41-й ИАП	56+21	3	?	0	12	62
129-й ИАП	57+46	2	38 (?)	0	44	19
124-й ИАП	70+29	2	29	0	6 (?)	62
126-й ИАП	50+23	2	?	0	0 (?)	71
74-й ШАП	49	0	15	15	0 (?)	34
33-й ИАП	31	4	27	1	0	0
123-й ИАП	58	9	18	0 (?)	18	13
ВСЕГО:	629	38	148	24	130	313

Note: - the initial number of aircraft includes all combat machines, including those temporarily out of order;

- for fighters of the 9th SAD, the first term is MiG-3 aircraft, the second - fighters of the "old types" (I-16, I-153); - 8 Il-2s in the 74th IAP, 20 Yak-1s in the 123rd IAP, 2 MiG-1s in the 33rd IAP were not taken into account; - the minimum known number of "old types" aircraft in the 129th IAP, 74th ShAP and 33rd IAP is indicated; - indicated "estimated", based on the reports of the German pilots, the number of aircraft shot down in the air of the 122nd IAP; - the number of shot down in the air includes all cases of forced landings outside the airfield.

The logic (and task) of constructing Table 11 was as follows: to separate, separate reports on the number of aircraft destroyed (damaged) on the ground, drawn up directly on the "hot pursuit" in parts, from the later writings of the Front Air Force Headquarters (about how these "writings" were written, will be discussed below). What is the result?

The most stunning result (indescribably surprising even me, although I have been writing about something like this for 10 years) is a string of zeros in the column "destroyed on the ground during the first enemy raid". Moreover, the zeros are real, based on documents, and two-thirds of the total number 24 is a quote from the memoirs of the commander of the 10th SAD, published in 1977. And the loss of 8 I-16s in the 122nd IAP is, strictly speaking, not the result of the first raid, but a combat report on the first four raids (*"4 raids were made on the Novy Dvor airfield by groups of 13-15 aircraft; losses: 2 aircraft burned down, 6 disabled"*). From the point of view of arithmetic, the number 24 is only 3.8% of the number 629, i.e. "crushing first strike" shrinks to the margin of error in determining the initial number of aircraft. Even with all the reservations about the inaccuracy and incompleteness of the figures given in Table 11, the general picture of the day begins to emerge quite clearly.

As for the 4th, 6th and 7th columns, the ratio of the figures put down there is largely conditional. The largest recorded losses on the ground seem to be in the 129th IAP, respectively, the figure in the 7th column (i.e. "losses of unknown origin") turns out to be not too large for this regiment

("only" 19 combat aircraft disappeared to no one knows where). However, the recorded losses (27 MiG-3s and 11 I-153s) appear in the regiment's railway records in the complete absence of any mention of an enemy air raid on the Tarnovo airfield (more on this in paragraph 5.3). There are also very shaky grounds for the

data in the 6th column ("remained as of the morning of June 23"). It may very well be that there are more serviceable aircraft left, and even much more - there is simply no documentary evidence of this, and they (confirmations) were completely superfluous for the division commander, who sent a report *"All fighters destroyed"* on June 22 at 10.30 am. The largest number of survivors (44 aircraft) again refers to the 129th IAP; I got it by simply summing up the number of aircraft destroyed (as stated in the regiment's railway data) on June 23 at the airfields of Kvater and Baranovichi (the logic here is simple - if they were destroyed, it means that they existed before the destruction and were able to fly to these airfields). In other words, all these figures mainly reflect the degree of decency of the commanders and the fantasies of the staff clerk ... Data on losses in the air are much more reliable. In most cases, even the place and time of the battle, the names of the dead pilots are known. In general, as Table 11 shows us once again, the 127th IAP and the 123rd IAP bore the

brunt of the fighting on the first day of the war - twenty-one "seagulls" that honestly burned down in the sky of the war. It makes sense to compare the figures given with the claims for the victory of German fighters. With regard to the southern flank of the front, this is not difficult to do: the JG-51 squadron declared 18 downed Soviet fighters, the headquarters and the 1st group of the JG-53 squadron declared 5, in total it turns out 23. (262) An unknown number of fighters shot down (declared) bomber groups Luftwaffe, including the SKG-210 squadron, armed with multi-purpose Me-110s. The losses of fighters of the 9th MAD and the 10th MAD indicated in Table 11 are 22

aircraft.

The situation with the northern flank of the Western Front is much more complicated for the historian - there, at the junction of two Soviet fronts, fighters of the 8th Luftwaffe Air Corps operated. far from

it is always possible to unambiguously correlate the applications of German fighters with the real areas of deployment and combat operations of Soviet fighter regiments (not to mention the fact that the aircraft is moving, and the battle with NWF fighters, which began in the Merkinė area, could end north of Grodno, i.e. . in the SF band). As a first approximation, the declared victories of the JG-27 and III / JG-53 fighters can be conditionally divided into two equal parts (the II / JG-52 group and two groups of the LG-2 squadron acted as attack aircraft and did not have air victories on June 22). With this approach, 24 Soviet aircraft are obtained, declared shot down on the northern flank of the Western Front, which should also include 3-5 bombers. Thus, the Germans (not counting two groups of multi-purpose Me-110s from the ZG-26 squadron) claimed about 20 downed fighters of the 11th SAD, our documents allow us to take into account 16 downed fighters. Yes, on the first day of the war, the Germans overestimated very modestly ... Now let's try to estimate the real losses

of the enemy. In the zone of operations of the Air Force of the Western Front, the Germans irretrievably lost 15 Bf-109 fighters (not counting obvious cases of non-combat accidents)

[38] . Another 9 "Messers" received damage of varying severity. (241) Purely arithmetically, the number 15 is much less than the number 38, even the number 24 (15 + 9) is less than 38. However, for the Luftwaffe, which entered the war with the Soviet colossus, having about 850 (including temporarily out of order!) Single-engine fighters on the front from Baltic to the Black Sea, such proportions of losses would be disastrous. Only the 7th column could inspire hope for success to the Germans; Of course, they have not seen this book, written in 2011, but hundreds, and then thousands of aircraft abandoned at airfields were visible to the naked eye.

And now let's look at how the results of the first day of the war were reflected in the reports of the Air Force Headquarters of the Western Front. On July 4, signed by the Chief of Staff of the Air Force of the Front, Colonel Khudyakov, the "Summary of losses of Zapfront Air Force aircraft in the period from 4.00 22.6 to 12.00 23.6.41" is sent to the head of the Main Directorate of the Red Army Air Force. (313) The falsification begins with the very first words: *"A surprise attack on forward operational airfields,*

located at a distance of 8-20 km from the state border, the material part was attacked by the enemy ... " A reader of this book has Map No. 4 at his disposal, it is easy to check there how many airfields were located at a distance of 8-20 km from the border; Was there really no such card in the Main Directorate of the Air Force? The surprising words that "the material part was attacked" also deserve attention. Not a military unit, i.e. an organized group of people bound by the Charter and military discipline, but a heap of soulless and defenseless "materiel". The phrase has the following continuation: *"and completely disabled [out of order] in 122 IAP, 16 BAP, 74 ShAP, 39 BAP, parts of 9 SAD."* For

greater persuasiveness, next to the number of the regiment (division) are the numbers of aircraft lost during the "sudden attack on forward airfields". The numbers were rewritten one to one from the list of aircraft in the regiments, not a single combat vehicle was missed, everything was scrapped - even 16 - 17 bombers of the 39th BAP, which not only flew safely to the Bobruisk airfield, but also fought as part of the 13th th dietary supplement until the end of June; written off and a dozen "MiGs" of the 41st IAP (9th SAD), which fought as part of Zakharov's division until July 3, and fifty fighters of the 129th IAP that survived after the defeat of the first day ... The compilers of the "Summary" decided not to waste time on trifles and, like a stealing caretaker, write off the entire warehouse to the consequences of a fire, down to the

In the same style and pace, the authors of the document dealt with the most distinguished fighter regiments on the first day of the war: on June 23, 1941, single planes remained in these units, which flew to the airfields of the second

lines..."

A few days later, someone probably suggested to his comrades that such a "Summary" does not look very nice: some kind of massacre of babies turns out, and not war. Where are the fierce battles, where are the first victories over the enemy? As a result, signed by the same Colonel Khudyakov, a "Report on the losses of the material part of the Air Force units of the Polar Front for the period from 22.6 to 5.7.41" appears. (314) Document deco

stamps of the highest degree of secrecy ("Special importance. Sov. secret"), and in the first place in the mailing list is the people's commissar of defense of the USSR. As you can easily see, it was the numbers from this archival document called "updated data on the losses of the Air Force of the Western Front" that migrated to thick monographs of Soviet historians, and from them - further, to newspaper and magazine pages, laying the foundation for the sacramental "1200, including number 800 on earth." It turns out

that according to the "updated data", there were fighting fights, yes, they say, some more! It turns out that on the first day of the war, the 9th SAD lost 74 (seventy-four) aircraft in the air! And this despite the fact that General Chernykh himself, in a combat report on the evening of June 25, writes: *"Our losses in air battles are no more than 5 aircraft,"* - summing up the reports and reports of the regiments allows us to increase this figure to 9, and even German fighters announced in the West front only eight (!) Downed "Migs". Losses in the air of the 10th SAD and the 11th SAD are more modestly overestimated, approximately twice (up to 23 and 34 aircraft, respectively). However, the most remarkable thing about these "updated data" is a dash in the "shot down in air battles" column in line 13 of the dietary supplement. The one whose 57 bombers were burned on June 22 by German fighters from JG-51 and I / JG-53.

The "updated data" was accompanied by a "Report on enemy aircraft shot down and destroyed at airfields for the period 22.6 - 5.7.41". (315) It turns out that during the day of June 22, three fighter divisions of the Air Force of the front in fierce air battles shot down 133 enemy aircraft (which, mind you, is exactly 2 aircraft more than they allegedly lost in these battles themselves). Overstating the number of victories in the air is quite an ordinary thing, there is nothing to be surprised at. They overestimated - not to say that it was very much (according to German data, the 2nd Air Fleet lost 25 combat aircraft irrevocably from enemy influence on the first day of the war, another 21 were damaged). Another thing is more important - to whom exactly they overestimated.

One could understand the logic of the compilers of the "Summary" if they overestimated the real victories of the pilots of the 123rd and 127th regiments five times, i.e. 10th and 11th divisions. However, the headquarters of the Air Force of the front, it seems, did not even have a vague idea of \u200b\u200bwhat really happened on June 22 at the forward airfields. If

As a result, they entered only 13 downed enemy aircraft in the line of the 10th SAD (i.e., significantly less than was declared by the 123rd IAP alone), but as many as 85 downed were listed for the 9th SAD! And since there was nothing of the kind, even closely similar, in the reports of the commanders of the regiments and the division as a whole, all these 85 non-existent aircraft went under the column "different"[39] . And that's not all - the next day, June 23, the already virtually non-existent 9th SAD shoots down another 25 enemy aircraft on the "Summary" paper (all again "different"), without losing a single one of its own in aerial combat! Know ours!

I foresee condemning voices - is it permissible to write in such a tone about the mistakes and weaknesses of people who risked their lives every minute? Yes, they risked every minute, moreover, these people lost her (life) untimely.

The commander of the Air Force of the Western Front, Major General I. I. Kopets, was the first to die. According to the generally accepted version, he shot himself on June 22, 1941 in his office, shocked by the defeat of the front's aviation. This version to this day has not been supported (however, it has not been refuted!) by any primary document, which, however, does not prevent this hypothesis from taking the place of irrefutable truth in Russian

historiography. In the available documents of the Air Force Directorate of the Western Front, there is not even the slightest mention of the disappearance of the commander. There was a man - and all left. Combat order No. 01 at 9.30 on June 22 is signed by the commander of the Air Force of the Western Front, Major General Kopets, and Combat Order No. 02 at 2 am on June 23 is signed by the deputy commander, Major General Tayursky, and he signs not as an "acting", but precisely as a commander . There is no order that the new person took the post of commander of the air force of the front. This is incredibly weird. This does not happen in the army - even the departure of the commander on vacation, the appointment of "acting" and the return of the former chief are accompanied by the

appearance of two corresponding orders. I did not manage to understand who signed the report of the commander of the 10th SAD to the commander of the Front Air Force. The message was sent at 2:45 p.m. At 4:55 p.m., someone signed a very strange resolution, not at all statutory content

summary". (316) The signature has nothing to do with the signatures of Tayursky, Taranenko (Deputy Chief of Staff, who on the first day of the war acted as Khudyakov during the latter's treatment in a hospital in Moscow), Khudyakov, Sviridov. Even worse, the signature begins with a perfectly distinct "K", but it's not Ivan Kopets' signature - there is no "I" at the beginning and the spelling of the "K" is completely different. What was it? But under the resolution

mentioned in the previous paragraph (*"we can't cover with fighters"*) on the telegram of the chief of staff of the 3rd DBAK there is a signature that undoubtedly looks like Tayursky's signature. The telegram was sent from Smolensk at 15.20, received in Minsk at 15.23. On the telegram is the inscription: "Hand over immediately." (310) There is no mark on the document about the time at which Tayursky signed the resolution, but it can be assumed that this was not much later than 16.00 (if not earlier). Who, then, signed at 16.55 on a report addressed specifically to the front air force commander? And if the "suicide" happened before this time, then there is even more reason to doubt the authenticity of the traditional version.

In the real world, there was no "defeat" of the aviation of the Western Front by noon on June 22: three divisions (12th BAD, 13th BAD, 43rd IAD) remained practically untouched, and a single hole, maintained the combat capability of the 127th IAP (11th SAD), the 123rd IAP and the 39th BAP (10th SAD). What exactly happened at that time at the airfields of the 9th SAD, it has not yet been possible to find out. In the world of reports and reports, in which at noon on June 22 there was the headquarters of the Air Force of the front, all the more there was no "defeat", which is quite clearly evidenced by Operational summary No. 01 of 12.00 on June 22. Judging by this document, the 11th SAD is fighting, 4 I-153s were lost in an air battle, nothing is said about other losses; from the 9th SAD and the 10th SAD "wire communication is broken, there is no information about the state of the units and the tasks they perform

And so, after reading such a summary, the Hero of the Soviet Union, holder of the Order of Lenin and the Order of the Red Banner, a participant in two wars (Spanish and Finnish), 34-year-old General Kopets shot himself? For a person with such a biography, an incomparably more natural act would be to sit in the cockpit of a combat aircraft (figh

I-16 was at the personal disposal of the commander of the Air Force), fly to Bialystok and personally sort out what was happening on the spot.

Several years ago, in the very first version of "Peacefully Sleeping Airfields", I suggested that Ivan Kopets died only by pure chance on the day the war began. And they came for the general on a completely different matter, people with warm hearts, "friends of the people," came. By that time, they had already arrived for Stern, Smushkevich, Loktionov, in a few days they would come for Rychagov, Ptukhin, Proskurov, Ionov, Arzhenukhin ... The list of those arrested as part of the "Aviator Case" promoted in May-June 1941 is long. All these strong and courageous people did not have time (could not, did not guess) to get away from the "investigation" and the wrong trial in the same way as the commander of the Air Force of the Western OVO managed to do, who shot himself (or was killed) during his arrest.

As a working hypothesis, this still seems to me the most plausible. The absence in the available funds of TsAMO of any documents explaining the reason for the unexpected change in the front air force commander only strengthened my assumption. And in 2008, the Belarusian magazine "Neman" (published in Minsk) published excerpts from the diary of Panteleimon Ponomarenko (in June 1941, he was the 1st secretary of the Belarusian Central Committee and, ex officio, a member of the Military Council of the Western OVO). The publication was prepared for publication by the well-known Russian historian V. Nevezhin, who worked a lot with precisely such personal, historical evidence (readers should be aware of his book "Stalin on the War. Table Speech 1933-1945"), and this can serve as some guarantee from outright fraud.

So in the entry for June 22, not a word was said on the issue of interest to us. Then, according to the diary, in the middle of the day on June 23, Ponomarenko had a telephone conversation with Stalin. The question of the evacuation of Minsk was discussed. And the conversation ended with the following words of Stalin: *"Yes, I almost forgot. Smushkevich testified that Kopets was a German spy. His deputy was appointed commander of aviation. Take a look at his qualities. Tell Pavlov about it."* (318) The last phrase deserves special attention. It turns out that the front commander, General of the Army Pavlov, and the PMC Ponomarenko did not know anything about the change in the commander of the Air Force (i.e., their

subordinate) and received this information from Moscow a day late? Or that General Kopets is dead, Pavlov and Ponomarenko already know, and Comrade Stalin only explains to them - what a hardened "enemy of the people" was the deceased? Dead or arrested?

"We can't cover with fighters." Chief of Staff Resolution

Air Force of the Western Front on the telegram of the Chief of Staff of the 3rd DBAK

On June 10, 2010, journalist Nikolai Kachuk published a long article about the life and death of Ivan Kopets in the newspaper with the wonderful title *Sovetskaya Belorussia. life of suicide*. The seventh month of the year is July, not June. And in the order of the Main Directorate of Personnel No. 0294 dated December 20, 1946, the same date is found: *"The former commander of the ZapOVO Air Force, Major General of Aviation I. I. Kopets, is excluded from the lists of the Armed Forces as having committed suicide on July 23, 1941."* In the same article, N. Kachuk refers to some diaries of the general's widow, Nina Pavlovna Kopets; she until the very departure from Minsk to Moscow (and this

happened on June 24, 1941) did not know anything about the fate of her husband, she was simply informed that he had flown to Bialystok. In Moscow, Nina Pavlovna was arrested and given five years, however, not as a ChSIR, but for "anti-Soviet agitation" ...

The Chekists did not "take a closer look" at the new commander for long. July 8, 1941 Andrey Ivanovich Tayursky, born in 1900, a member of the CPSU (b) since 1926, was arrested. In the well-known certificate, which, following the results of the "investigation", L. Beria submitted to Stalin on January 29, 1942, the following is said about Tayursky: *"He is convicted as a participant in an anti-Soviet military conspiracy by testimony ... (everyone refused to testify). He confessed that he showed inactivity in the leadership of the Air Force of the Western Front, as a result of which the troops entrusted to him suffered heavy losses in people and materiel.* One cannot but agree that the losses were great and the fault of the leadership in this is indisputable. However, inactivity is not yet a "military conspiracy", and a slander knocked out by torture is not proof of guilt. But neither the author of the certificate nor its addressee want to see these obvious things. Tayursky was shot on February 23, 1942. On the day of the Red Army. Meanwhile, the chief of staff of the Air Force of the Western Front, S. A.

Khudyakov, is making a brilliant career. The colonel turns into an air marshal, successfully commands the 1st Air Army, becomes chief of staff of the Red Army Air Force, then deputy commander-in-chief of the Air Force. During the Yalta Conference, Marshal Khudyakov, Stalin's adviser on aviation issues, can be seen in numerous photographs standing a few steps from Stalin, Roosevelt, Churchill. After the defeat of Nazi Germany, Marshal Khudyakov, as commander of the 12th Air Army of the Trans-Baikal Front, liberates Manchuria. Frees from the Japanese, from the Japanese protege of the emperor of the puppet state of Manchukuo Pu Yi, as well as from the jewels of the Chinese imperial dynasty. The deposed emperor is put on one plane, the second is loaded with jewels. The one with Pu Yi flew to Moscow, but the second plane disappeared. Along with priceless treasures. On December 14, 1945, the commander of the 12th Air Army was captured by the Smersh group in Chita, taken to Moscow and placed in the terrible Sukhanovskaya prison of the NKVD. The arrest warrant will

issued only in March of the following, 1946. I will immediately emphasize that I am not even trying to hint at Khudyakov's involvement in the theft of "trophy property". In that giant thieves' "raspberry" that the CP / GB turned into at the end of the Stalin era, anything could happen; Khudyakov could have been arrested precisely because he became an unwanted witness to some dark deeds ...

Then the most incredible begins. During the investigation, it turns out that Marshal S. A. Khudyakov is not Khudyakov at all, but has been living for more than a quarter of a century under the false name of A. A. Khanferyants, who, using forged documents, entered the service in the Red Army. From that moment on, the whole story finally turns into a terrible tragic farce, and the infamous "26 Baku Commissars" appear on the scene. The former marshal is charged with the fact that he (at the age of 16!) "was recruited by the English officer Wilson for espionage activities and participated in the escort of the arrested commissars to the place of execution." The investigation lasted an unusually long time, the death sentence was pronounced on April 18, 1950 and carried out on the same day. In August 1954 Khudyakov-Khanferyants was rehabilitated. (320) Haven't we deviated too far from the discussion of the events of June

41st? No, I think that this couple of pages turned out to be just about the most important thing. The fact that the history of the War is just a part (yes, a very important, very memorable part that determined a lot and for a long time) of the whole, and the whole is the history of the Stalinist empire. This empire fought as it lived. And she lived - as she fought.

2.9. After the 22nd

Since the participants and contemporaries of the events of Soviet books of the 60s - 70s. If they hadn't read it yet, they didn't even know that "everything was lost" on the evening of June 22. Both in Moscow and in Minsk that evening the most decisive orders were drawn up and signed. Directive No. 3 of the Main Military Council (sent to the troops at 21.15 signed by Timoshenko, Zhukov and Malenkov) demanded *"to encircle and destroy the enemy's Suwalki grouping by the end of June 24 by concentric concentrated strikes of the troops of the North-Western and Western Fronts and to capture the Suwalki area by the end of June 24."* (321) In pursuance of this Directive, by order of the commander of the Western Front, Army General Pavlov, a "horse-mechanized group" was created, consisting of the 6th and 11th mechanized corps, the 6th cavalry corps; Pavlov entrusted the command of the group to his deputy, Lieutenant General Boldin. KMG Boldina had the task, advancing north from Bialystok and Grodno along the left (western) bank of the Neman River, to "cut off" the communications of the 3rd

Wehrmacht Panzer Group. The mechanized corps of the Red Army (as well as the tank division of the Wehrmacht) is a huge "steel tape" stretching for many kilometers, and the tanks in this "steel tape" make up no more than one tenth of the total number of moving objects; everything else is lightly armored or not having any armor at all, which could be disabled by fragments of aerial bombs and machine-gun and cannon fire from attack aircraft. That is why the actions of tank formations - any actions, "first strike" or "retaliatory strike", offensive, counter-offensive or withdrawal - had to be covered from the air by fighters. It is no coincidence that Guderian's tank group and the best fighter squadron of the Luftwaffe (JG-51), the most powerful 6th mechanized corps in the Red Army and the largest (in terms of the number of fighters) 9th SAD were next to each other on the morning of June 22 ... By

the morning of 23 June 9th SAD as a combat-ready unit in the "Bialystok ledge" was no longer there. This unexpected and supreme

a degree of alarming fact demanded from the command of the Air Force of the Western Front quick and decisive action to correct the situation; in other words, it was necessary to relocate in close proximity to the area of proposed actions of KMG Boldin, the only fighter aviation unit remaining in the Air Force of the front - the 43rd IAD. It is not excluded (it is difficult to assume anything definite, because the fate of three hundred fighters of the division of Sergei Chernykh is still shrouded in darkness) that by timely "strengthening the leadership", it would be possible to restore the combat capability of the remnants of the fighter regiments of the 9th SAD.

Unfortunately, in reality, nothing of this was done, *"a long column of vehicles left Bialystok and was already far outside the city early on Monday morning"*, the uncontrolled remnants of the 9th SAD hastily "relocated" to the east, four regiments of the 43rd IAD remained at airfields in the region of Baranovichi and Minsk. Of course, the death (arrest, suicide) of the front air force commander also contributed to the general disorganization. Signed at 2 a.m. on June 23 by the new commander of the Air Force of the Western Front, Combat Order No. 02 set the following task for the fighters of Major General Zakharov: *"43 IAD from the Baranovichi region with two regiments to cover the strike force in the Bialystok, Lipsk region (15 km northwest of Grodno)"*. (322) From Baranovichi to the

specified area at least 160 - 170 km. What kind of "air cover for a strike group" could we talk about if at such a distance the I-16 fighter worked out three-quarters of the fuel supply only for the flight to the patrol area and back? And, judging by the documents of the 43rd IAD, there were no "two regiments" in Baranovichi, but there was only one 162nd IAP that flew there on the morning of June 22. It was impossible to provide many hours of patrolling in the air over Boldin's KMG mechanized columns with one regiment (and, as can be seen from the available information, even such attempts were not made), but the task of escorting their bombers to the Suwalki-Grodno region could theoretically be solved - the range of the "donkey" completely allowed it.

And very decisive tasks were set before the *bomber* aviation by order No. 02:

assist the strike force in destroying the enemy ... The tension of combat work for all air divisions is 2 sorties. (322) The forces were still considerable - despite the heavy losses of the first day of the war, as part of the 8 bomber regiments of the Front Air Force (i.e., not counting the defeated units of the "first echelon" and not counting the emerging regiments of the 12th BAD) should have remained about 240 aircraft. Even taking into account the large number of faulty (damaged) machines, the voltage established by the order should have turned into three hundred combat sorties.

Combat order No. 02 was executed as follows: "Operational report No. 04 headquarters of the Air Force of the

Western Front. 1. The Air Force of the Zapfront during 23.6.41 continued to fight with suitable reserves and motorized units of the enemy in the area of Grodno, Lipsk, Sopotskin and, destroying the enemy Air Force, covered Baranovich, Minsk.

2. 12 BAD during 23.6.41 carried out layered strikes squadrons on the accumulation of enemy motorized parts ...

At 13.20 9 SB attacked the enemy's motorized units in the area Grodno, Sopotskin, Kuryanka. Dropped FAB-100 and FAB-250.

At 13.16, 6 SBs (the document says "5 SBs", but judging by the number of bombs dropped, this is a typo. - MS) attacked the concentration of troops in the Kholynka area, 24 FAB-100s were

dropped. At 12.27 6 SB attacked the mechanized units in the Lipsk area. 24 FAB-100s were dropped (that is, the already modest bomb load of the SB was reduced to 400 kg. - M.S.).

9 SB attacked the landing (?) at the Mihalishki airfield. 43

BAP did not fly sorties. There are no casualties in the division. 3. 13

BAD bombarded the accumulation of infantry, artillery and cars.

125 BAP, consisting of 16 SB, at 8.22 from H=2600m bombarded the infantry concentration in the area of Sopotskin, Lipsk. Dropped 96 FAB-100. The bombs hit the target. The regiment was fired upon by anti-aircraft artillery and attacked by 11 Me-109s on their return. 3 Me-109s shot down. Losses: burned 3 SB with crews. One SB landed in Baranovich, 1 SB, under the control of pilot Sinyakov, landed the plane on the front line due to a fire.

39 BAP (i.e. a group of 16 - 17 bombers of the 10th SAD, who flew from Pinsk to Bobruisk on the afternoon of June 22 - M.S.). 9 Sat at 8.54

from the H-4300 they bombarded the accumulation of infantry and vehicles on the northern outskirts of Sopotskin. The last one burns in 3 points. 90 FAB-100s were dropped (if this is not a typo, then this is a record in the use of SB in the first days of the war. - M.S.). When approaching the target and retreating, they fired on FOR. 3 aircraft patrolled over the target, type not established.

4. 43 ID covered Baranovich, Minsk. During the day, units of the 43rd IAD fought air battles over Minsk. Fighters and ZA shot down 4 enemy aircraft ... " (323)

As you can see, the cover of the bombers by fighters of the 43rd IAD is not even in the report. Accurately summing up all the figures, we are also forced to state that the order "two flights per day" was not carried out even in the amount of "one flight for two aircraft"; according to the Operational Report No. 04, the bomber aviation of the front completed a total of 54 sorties on the day of June 23 (however, in the combat report of the headquarters of the 12th BAD it is said that not 9, but 18 aircraft flew to fight the non-existent landing at Mikhalishka). It is worth

paying attention to the situation in the 13th dietary supplement. One regiment (out of five) took part in the hostilities, and this is exactly the 125th BAP, which the day before, on June 22, suffered minimal losses (see Table 10). All the rest, as one might assume, were guided not by a combat order, but by the impressions of yesterday's meeting with the Luftwaffe fighters. There are well-known names for such inaction in wartime - but it's not for us to pronounce them ... The day of June 23 began not much better in the 12th Air Division either:

"6.10 23.6.41. At the apparatus, Colonel Sviridov (head of the operational department of the front air force headquarters). Report where the units are now, what they are doing, why they are not carrying out Combat Order No. 02 of the front

commander. What's the matter? - Reporting (Colonel Minkov, chief of staff of the 12th BAD). First. Parts are finishing the relocation, 128 BAP - Krulevshchizna, 43 BAP - Calico.

Second. From Postavay they report that due to the lack of fuel (inaudible) they did not take off for the mission. All.

- Repeat.

- Due to the lack of fuel, they did not fly to the target and back. All.

- Why didn't you report earlier, but report when you need to carry out a combat mission? - I reported

about the lack of fuel yesterday, 22.6 at 23.45, HP 6454 reported that 128 BAPs have not yet been charged. - Comrade

Minkov, between 23.45 and 6.00 there is a gap of more than six hours. And when they received a combat order, why didn't they report that they couldn't fulfill it?

- I personally reported to Major Beskaravainy at 22.00 in a combat report that the 43rd and 128th had not yet been refueled, and there were no traces of fuel (as

in the text. - M.S.) . - When do you plan to provide fuel supply? I'm looking into the fuel issue right now. In Krulevshchizna it is temporary (inaudible). Please inform the fuel supply station. Artimuschestvo and food no data. Whom to contact on these issues?

- Comrade Colonel, there is fuel in Krulevshchizna. An airfield for your 128 BAP was supposed and prepared there. The commander ordered that all measures be taken to refuel the units with fuel and fulfill the combat order. All. Do it!" (324)

At 10.15, the Headquarters of the Air Force of the Front in the person of Major Kartashev again contacted the

Chief of Staff of the 12th BAD: "How is the implementation of Combat Order

No. 02 going? Has anyone returned yet? - Communication with Krulevshchizna was unexpectedly interrupted (German saboteurs crawled 350 km from the border?). Didn't receive

the message. Upon receipt, I will report immediately ... " (325) It should be noted that after all these negotiations, gasoline was found, and the 128th BAP completed 30 sorties, i.e. again, as on June 22, it turned out to be the best - both in terms of the total number of sorties, and in relation to the number of sorties to the presence of serviceable aircraft. And the very fact that the telegraph tape of such unseemly content was not destroyed in the chaos of the retreat, but was preserved in the archive fund of the 12th BAD, suggests that in the division of Colonel Aladinsky, relative (relative to others) order was maintained ...

Another, and very clear, illustration of the events of June 23 can serve as a very short (or even their complete absence) lists of victories of the Luftwaffe fighters. On the first day of the war, the JG-51 squadron claimed 93 downed Soviet aircraft, on June 23 - only 2, the JG-53 squadron claimed 71 and 4, respectively. June - not a single one, II / JG-51 declared 28 shot down on June 22 and 0 - June 23 ... Have you forgotten how to shoot down? The commanders of the fighter groups in their reports, without saying a word, write about something else: "There were no meetings with enemy aircraft in the air." (367)

As a modest consolation, it can be assumed that the low activity of the aviation of the Western Front on June 23 did not noticeably reduce the effectiveness of Boldin's KMG actions - for the simple reason that the deadlines for concentrating the strike force at the initial offensive lines established by the order were disrupted, and in fact the counterstrike 6- th mechanized corps began only in the middle of the day on June 24. The same day became the day of fierce battles in the air. The next order of the

commander of the Air Force of the Western Front, which arrived at the headquarters of the 12th BAD at 6.30 on June 24, demanded *"to support the shock cavalry-mechanized group in the area of Indura, Grodno, then on Druskeniki, Merkin; voltage - **three departures** (underlined by me. - M.S.) "*. (326) Judging by the combat report signed by Colonel Minkov, by the end of the day on June 23, the regiments of the 12th BAD had the following number of aircraft: the 128th BAP - 44 SB, of which 37 were serviceable, the 43rd BAP - 15 Su-2 (including 12 serviceable ones) and 29 serviceable RZETs. (327) It was not possible to multiply these numbers by three, but nevertheless the division was not inactive: *Combat*

report (b / n), headquarters of the 12th division, for
24.6. 1. 128 BAP made 33 attack sorties, dropped 16 pcs. FAB-250, 100 pcs. FAB-100. One Me-109 was shot down (later, one Me-110 shot down on June 24 appears in the reports. - M.S.).

Lost 5 SB from artillery (sic) and fighters
enemy... The regiment has 39 SBs.

2. 43 BAP in 9 N.S. 53 min. 9 Su-2s [hit] tanks in the Druskeniki area. Dropped 6 FAB-100s and 30 AO-25s. 9 RZET in the area

Mikhalishki found nothing (the fight against the "landing" is still going on). Has serviceable 20Su-2 and 32 RZET. 3. The 215th, 209th and 6th regiments did not conduct combat operations. (328)

The inactivity of the 209th BAP and the sudden increase in the number of serviceable Su-2s in the 43rd BAP most likely have a common cause - the 209th BAP transferred serviceable materiel to the 43rd regiment. In a few more days, the personnel of the 209th BAP will be sent to Moscow for reorganization.

On June 24, the 13th BAD also returned to active operations. The division delivered a series of strikes against Guderian's tank columns advancing along the Kobrin-Baranovichi and Pruzhany-Slonim roads, i.e. in the zone of action of the squadron JG-51. Again, as on June 22, without fighter cover, again - with terrible losses:

"Operational report No. 3 by 22.00 24.6.41, headquarters of 13 BAD, Bobruisk.

1. 13 BAD in the period from 10.00 to 21.00 made 146 sorties, bombarded enemy motorized mechanized columns along the roads of Pruzhany, Kamenetz-Litovsky, Dobrynevo, Kobrin.

Dropped 591 FAB-100, 96 FAB-50, 326 AO-25, 171 AO-15.

2. 24 BAP. On 27 Sat from 10.00 to 10.45 from H = 2500 m tanks bombed in the area of Pruzhany, Ruzhany. On 19 Sat, from 16.50 to 17.55, motorized mech columns were bombed in the Pruzhany area. Several direct hits were

noted. Over the target and back to Slutsk attacked by five "nines" Me-109. Losses: 17 crews did not return. 3. 97

BAP. Made 34 sorties from 15.30 to 20.38. H = 300-1000 m bombed tank columns from Ivantsevini to Kartuz-Bereza. 10 direct hits noted.

Losses: 12 Su-2s shot down, 3 Su-2s in need of field repairs. Killed 4 pilots, 5 pilots. 7 crews landed on an emergency, details are unknown.

4. 121 BAP. On 18 Sat from 10.00 to 12.00 from H=2000m bombarded a column of tanks in the area of Pruzhany. Direct hits on the column were noted. The 4th squadron was attacked by enemy fighters, they did not drop their bombs.

Losses: 4 SBs were shot down over the target, 5 SBs made an emergency landing on their territory, 6 SBs had holes. Enemy aircraft shot down: 3 Xe-112, 2 Me- 109[40] — .

5. 125 BAP. On 18 Sat from 10.00 to 11.00 from H = 5000m, tanks and motorized mechanized columns bombarded in the Pruzhany area. At 15.10 the regiment was attacked by enemy bombers at the Solon

airfield. Losses: 2 SBs were shot down, destroyed at the SB airfield (as in the text).

The commander of the regiment, Major Konets, was killed.

6. 130 BAP. (inaudible, presumably - 15) sorties. From H = 800-1600 m, clusters of vehicles, tanks and infantry bombed in the area of Kobrin, Zhabinka and tanks on the march near the Grudopol station (35 km southwest of Baranovichi). Hits are good.

Losses: 1 crew was shot down, 2 crews were forced to land on their territory. 7.

162 RAP[41] 15 SB with H=400-600m bombed enemy motorized mechanized columns in the area of Kobrin, Kartuz-

Bereza. Losses: 7 SBs have bullet holes. Two of them require repairs in workshops, the rest 2 - 3 hours of repair.

8. Observation established ... 9.

*The airfield and the city of Bobruisk were bombed. At 12.35 12 aircraft, at 20.30 7 aircraft, at 21.15 5 enemy aircraft. Up to 80 bombs of various calibers were dropped on the airfield . **1 Sat burned down** (underlined by me. - M.S.).*

10. Weather ... " (329) The division with the

"unlucky number" even in the pre-war period became one of the best in the Soviet Air Force. "The division commander, Major General Polynin, worked hard to quickly and better prepare the flight crew for combat missions ... As a result, 13 BAD takes first place among the formations of the district Air Force in combat training for 1941 ... For April 1941, despite the fact that the units divisions flew a lot (1074 hours), there were no serious flight accidents in the division. The main (and practically the only) shortcoming noted in the May (1941) report of the Air Force command of the Western OVO was "the isolation of party political work from life and the tasks solved by parts of the division." (330)

For the commander of the 13th BAD, Hero of the Soviet Union, Major General F.P. Polynin, the war that began on June 22, 1941 was already the third in a row. In addition to participation in the Soviet-Finnish war (such an episode in the biography is found in almost all commanders of the Soviet Air Force, from the regiment and above), General Polynin also had the experience of an air war in China, in which he participated (intermittently) already from 1933. It was he who was the commander of the group of bombers who bombed the Japanese air base on the island of Taiwan on February 23, 1938. An unprecedented raid 800 km long over the territory of China occupied by the Japanese was organized and carried out by Polynin in such a way that the Japanese air defense not only failed to provide any resistance, but did not even detect the very fact of the passage of 28 Soviet bombers. The war

gave a tough test, and not everyone passed it. In the previous chapter, we already mentioned some of the Red Banner regiments, which, as it turned out in June 1941, were a formidable force, but only in the fight against an obviously weaker enemy. The 24th Red Banner BAP of the 13th Air Division was among the best in the situation of a real war. On June 24, the regiment completed 46 sorties, which was 1.5 - 2 times the number of serviceable aircraft - an unusually high combat voltage, by the standards of the Soviet Air Force. On the second sortie of that day, out of 19 bombers, two returned to their airfield. This is an extremely high (by the standards of any Air Force) level of losses, and it is difficult to find an air unit in the history of World War II that would continue combat work after such losses. The losses in other regiments of the 13th BAD were slightly less, however, on June 25, the division is still fighting:

“Operational report No. 4 by 22.00 on 25.6.41, headquarters of 13 BAD,

Bobruisk. 1. 13 BAD carried out 98 sorties to bombard the enemy's mechanical units on the march and in areas of concentration, at river crossings. Grivda and r. Schara. 2. 24

BAP. He performed 12 sorties, dropped 96 FAB-100s (loading 8 bombs per plane, i.e. somewhat more than usual. - M.S.). From a height of H \u003d 1300-1800m, they bombarded crossings on the river. Grivda and Schara. According to the observations of the crews, the target was not destroyed. E

covered FOR the enemy. When falling away from the target, 32 Me-109 and Xe-112 enemy fighters attacked. 5 Me-109s shot down.

Losses: 7 aircraft with crews did not return. 3. 97

BAP. 5 Su-2 planes carried out reconnaissance, 29 Su-2 planes with H = 1300-2000 m bombarded the accumulation of enemy mechanical units in the areas of Ivantsevichi, Kartuz-Berezai Pruzhany. Dropped 67 FAB-100, 69 FAB-50. There were direct hits on the target.

Losses: 2 Su-2s with crews were shot down, 2 aircraft require repair.

4. 125

BAP. 6 SB planes bombarded the accumulation of tanks in the forest northwest of Grudopol and the bridge on the river. Grivda.

Dropped 20 FAB-100 (a very strange number. - M.S.).

There are no losses. 5. 130 BAP. 8 SB aircraft with H = 2300 m bombarded a cluster of motorized parts 15 km from Kartuz-Berez. Dropped 48 FAB-100. There were direct hits in the cluster of cars and people. 4

Me-109s shot down. Losses: 7 SBs, of which 4 were villages in the battle area (so in the text. - M.S.), 2 burned down over the target, 1 was forced to land in Petrikovo. The eighth sat "on his stomach" at his airfield, in need of

6. 121 BAP. During the day, successive strikes bombarded enemy columns on the Gonchars, Kartuz Berezai and Pruzhany and Ivantsevichi airfields. Each of the airfields has up to 40 enemy aircraft of various types. 27 sorties were made, 180 bombs of various calibers were dropped[42]. Direct hits on motorized mechanized columns and the Pruzhany airfield were noted. Losses: 5 SB did not

return, and one plane made an emergency landing on its territory.

7. 2 IL-2 10 SAD made an assault raid on a

motorized mechanized column from Grudopol to st. oblique. There are no losses ... " (331) The arithmetic results of

the combat work of the 13th BAD are presented in the following table:

Таблица 13

	22.6	23.6	24.6	25.6
24-й БАП	41 / 28 / 9	32 / 0 / 0	32 / 46 / 17	15 / 12 / 7
97-й БАП	35 / 0 / 0	35 / 0 / 0	35 / 34 / 12	23 / 34 / 2
121-й БАП	56 / 27 / 8	48 / 0 / 0	48 / 26 / 17	31 / 27 / 6
125-й БАП	38 / 27 / 2	36 / 16 / 4	32 / 18 / 3	29 / 6 / 0
130-й БАП	38 / 27 / 20	18 / 0 / 0	18 / 15 / 3	15 / 8 / 7
ВСЕГО:	208 / 109 / 39	169 / 16 / 4	165 / 139 / 52	113 / 87 / 22

Note: the first figure is the number of aircraft in the regiment (including defective ones), the second is the number of sorties, the third is losses (including forced landings).

The figures given in the table cannot claim high accuracy, in particular, because the same episodes are described in the operational reports of regimental and divisional headquarters with significant differences. Be that as it may, the overall picture of events emerges quite clearly: in the first four days of the war, the 13th BAD carried out 351 sorties and lost 135 bombers in the air (taking into account 18 aircraft of the Flight Commander Courses shot down on June 22). In order to appreciate such a scale of losses, we recall that the Air Force of the Southern Front lost 189 combat aircraft in the air in 40 days of June and July of the 41st year (in all categories: shot down by fighters, shot down by anti-aircraft fire, did not return from a combat mission) all types; The Air Force of the neighboring North-Western Front lost about 130 bombers in the air by July 10-15. The unusually high losses of the 13th BAD, in

addition to the reasons common to all bomber units of the Soviet Air Force (lack of fighter cover, poor training of airborne gunners, flights in small groups), are also explained by the fact that this division struck at the enemy's main strike group, bombed not random (and dubious in terms of their significance) goals, and the tank columns of the Guderian group[43]. Of course, the enemy also made every effort to "clear the air" in the zone of his main attack. In addition, one more thing should be taken into account

an important circumstance - the exceptionally high rate of withdrawal of the ground units of the Red Army on the left (southern) flank of the Western Front; as a result, almost all the bombers that landed on an emergency landing passed into the category of irretrievable losses. The chronology of the military operations of the 3rd DBAK developed in a similar way. On June 23, long-range bombers were almost completely inactive, only 8 crews of a separate 212th DBAP, acting according to pre-war plans, bombed Warsaw and its suburbs from sky-high heights in the evening:

"Combat report No. 5,

headquarters of 3 AK, Smolensk, 1.05 24.6 .41 1. 212 DBAP from 19.17 to 19.48 23.6.41 with eight DB-3f

bombarded FAB-100 Warsaw.

a) A link (two aircraft) at 19.17 from H-8000 bombed the Prague railway junction (a suburb of Warsaw. - M.S.), as a result of the bombing, fires broke out at the station, as well as in the city center.

b) A link (3 aircraft) at 19.48 from the N-8000 bombed the Rembertug cartridge and shell factory, as a result of the bombing, a huge explosion occurred. c) The

third link (3 aircraft) at 19.25 from H=8000 bombed the Mokotov airfield, the bombs fell well on the airfield and structures. As a result of the bombing, fires broke out, no aircraft were observed at the airfield (it is difficult to notice an aircraft from a height of 8 km. - M.S.).

d) Countermeasures for ZA and fighter aircraft in the target area not met

The rest of the sorties were not made. Chief of Staff of the 3rd Army Corps, Colonel Kozintsev. (332)

According to the report of the corps headquarters, by the morning of June 24, 137 DB-3f bombers were combat-ready in units of the 3rd DBAC (38 in the 96th DBAP, 28 (?) in the 98th DBAP, 14 in the emerging 207th DBAP and 57 in the 212th DBAP). (333) This day was the first in a series of days of very intense (and by the standards of the Soviet Air Force - and completely "record") combat work: 170 sorties were completed, bombing attacks were carried out on the Vilnius airfield (already inhabited by that time by German air units), a cluster enemy troops in the Grodno region, motorized mechanized columns on the Pruzhany-Slonim highway. Losses amounted to 29 aircraft, and in units operating on the southern flank (i.e. under the blows of Mölders squadron fighters), from combat

Exactly half of the bombers did not return from the flight (10 losses for 18 sorties in the 207th DBAP and 14 losses for 29 sorties in the 212th

DBAP). (311) In the next two days, the situation on the ground deteriorated rapidly. KMG Boldin's counterattack ended in nothing, a thousand tanks melted away without a trace among forests and swamps, on the evening of June 25, the 2nd Panzer Group of the Wehrmacht occupied Baranovichi, on the morning of June 26, the 3rd Panzer Group went to the northern suburbs of Minsk. On the same day, June 26, the People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR, Marshal Timoshenko, signed the Stavka Directive, according to which the Long-Range Aviation formations were tasked with “ *systematic continuous raids, day and night, to destroy enemy tanks ... bombard **from a height of 400 meters*** (emphasized by me. - M.S.) *not in small groups, but in regiments.*

The logic of the High Command is not difficult to understand: in previous days, Moscow received dozens of reports that the planned counterattacks of the mechanized corps were thwarted by enemy air strikes, which “chased every vehicle”, “disabled up to 60-70% of the tanks”, “smashed all the rear of the tank divisions”, etc. Now the Headquarters hoped that powerful Soviet air strikes would be able, if not to destroy the enemy's motorized columns, then at least to slow down their continuous advance to the east. From the text of the Directive (“*to bombard from a height of 400 meters, not in small groups, but in regiments*”), it is clear that already on the fifth day of the war, the Headquarters correctly understood much of what two generations of Soviet historians did not want to see in the next five decades. However, Marshal Timoshenko was mistaken in the main thing - with the weapons of that era, it was possible to defeat a tank division from the air only on the paper of panic reports ...

Two days later, the commander of the 3rd DBAK reported to the front

air force headquarters: “*26.6. tasks were carried out by all DB-3 regiments throughout the day, they destroyed enemy tank units in the area of Molodechno, Vilna, Oshmyany, Krevo, preventing them from advancing southeast of the Rakov, Radoshkovichi line (35 km from Minsk) . Made 254 sorties DB-3 (battle of tanks with DB-3). Bombed from low altitudes, using the dive method, and, in addition, machine gun*

shelling of motor columns ... As a result, the enemy suffered the loss of tanks, vehicles, gas tanks ... There are

28.6 serviceable 80, faulty 17 aircraft and 10 Yak-4 (light twin-engine bomber, aircraft of this type were ferried from Moscow to the Western Front and thus ended up at the airfields of the Smolensk air hub . - M.S.) There are 136 crews ... ” (334) 254 sorties carried out in one day by about a hundred long-range bombers. Not a single

formation of the bomber aviation of the western districts / fronts fought with such tension. Even taking into account the fact that the distance from the airfields of the Smolensk air hub to the object of attack had decreased by that day to 300 km, these figures look almost unbelievable. It was on June 26, attacking a German tank column near the village of Radoshkovichi (on the Molodechno-Minsk highway), that the crews of captains Nikolai Gastello and Alexander Maslov (207th DBAP) were killed. The name of one of them passed from history to legend...

The only fighter division (43rd IAD) remaining in the Air Force of the Western Front was by no means inactive either. The division had four fighter regiments (160th, 161st, 162nd and 163rd). As can be seen from the numbers, the regiments, and indeed the entire division as a whole, were relatively "young" (formed in the fall of 1940). This circumstance benefited the cause: by definition, the old, with great physical deterioration, materiel in the division could not be, and the newest, but still very "raw" fighters (MiG-3, Yak-1) were sent primarily to the well-deserved, highly experienced connections (like the 9th SAD). As a result, the fighter regiments of the 43rd IAD on the eve of the war were armed with solid "donkeys" (only the 160th IAP was completely on "seagulls") of the latest modifications, with powerful M-62 / M-63 engines, with minimal wear. *"The materiel is new, serviceable, in good condition,"* we read in the report of the ZapOVO Air Force Command dated May 15, 1941.

Division commander Major General G.N. Zakharov was young for years (born in 1908), but it is categorically impossible to call him "inexperienced". By June 1941, Zakharov had already won two wars (in the skies of Spain and China) and managed to work as the commander of the Air Force of the Siberian Military District.

Later, Major General Zakharov became a Hero of the Soviet Union, holder of many orders, commander of the 303rd IAD, which included the famous Normandie-Neman regiment, staffed by French volunteer pilots, and after the war wrote the famous book of memoirs "I am a fighter". (238) For all these reasons, both General Zakharov himself and his 43rd air division became very famous in the narrow circles of our compatriots interested in the history of the war. On the pages of memoirs, the combat training of the 43rd IAD looks great:

"The sky above the airfield was trembling from the roar of engines ... Everything was buzzing, taking off, shooting, landing from morning to evening every day ... We were told: "You have good equipment, a well-equipped airfield hub, you have been given the right to select the best graduates of flight schools, you are not save fuel. One thing is required of you - to make the division combat-ready as soon as possible. The task was extremely clear, and we were intensively engaged in flight training ... "

But from the report of the district air force headquarters dated May 15, 1941, it follows that the commander of the 43rd

IAD was "spoken" and much more: *"The division is currently the most lagging behind of all the other divisions of the ZapOVO. With 239 combat aircraft, the command of the division and regiments was slowly and hesitantly approaching the commissioning of ordinary flight personnel ... The situation is even worse with flights for combat use. For the entire winter period, with a flight time of 2127 hours, the division has only 55 air firing*

and 27 air battles ... Order No. 0155 characterized that in 161 IAP, which is part of this division, there is a collapse of discipline. By this order, the commander of the 161st IAP was removed from work, and the division commander was reprimanded. Despite orders No. 0022 and 0155, the situation with discipline in the 43rd IAD did not improve, but continued to deteriorate. Here are the facts: (the following is a list of cases of drunkenness, "ugly statements" and "immoral phenomena", up to the suicide of political instructor K. and the murder - shot dead by a sentry - junior lieutenant

There is no doubt - fighter pilots do not come out of good boys, but there must be a measure for everything ... It is also worth noting that in the report "On the Combat Work of the 43rd Air Division for 6 Months of the Great Patriotic War", the division commander already emphasizes

not on the fact that "from morning to evening everything was buzzing, taking off and firing", but on objective difficulties: *"For the most part, the flight crew was not sufficiently trained, had no combat experience, had little knowledge of the tactics of air combat, both of their aviation and aviation enemy; did not know how to use the weapons of aircraft, both small arms and bombers ... "* (336)

The results of the combat work of the 43rd IAD in the first days of the war look just as contradictory. Relocated on June 22 to Baranovichi, the 162nd IAP was mainly engaged in the self-defense of its airfield. I failed to find any "traces" of the regiment's participation in covering Boldin's KMG tank columns or escorting our bombers (this, of course, does not exclude the possibility that "traces" can still be found). Undoubtedly, the fact that the 162nd IAP was actually withdrawn from the 43rd IAD (in all further reports, reports and reports about its existence is not even mentioned) and was operationally subordinated to the command of the 60th IAP formed in Baranovichi fighter division. On the morning of June 25, when Guderian's tanks reached the near approaches to Baranovichi, the flight crew abandoned the planes at the airfield and "relocated" to the east. Of course, in Zakharov's memoirs there is no word

"abandoned", everything is written there much more decently: *"In the first three days, the regiment did not lose a single pilot in battle. However, the deformed airfield, which had been under continuous bombardment for two days, became unsuitable for combat work. It was impossible to take off from it. The surviving fighters were to be destroyed and the city left on foot."* Not to mention the fact that it is quite difficult to "plow" the Baranovichi airfield (airfield 1400x1200 m) to such an extent that the I-16 (running distance 230 meters) could not take off from it (especially if this airfield is covered by a fighter regiment with 62 aircraft and 64 pilots), in addition to the mentioned airfield, the 15th (Baranovichi) air base area included 6 more airfields[44] . If there was a desire, there was where to disperse four squadrons of the 162nd IAP ...

Three regiments of the division, armed with 60 I-153s and 115 I-16s by the beginning of the war (there were slightly more pilots in each regiment than aircraft), began hostilities from

airfields of Minsk (Loshchitsa and Slep'yanka) and Pukhovichi (55 km southeast of Minsk). They acted, judging by the combat report of the headquarters of the 43rd IAD by 20.00 on June 25, very actively. In fact, in three days (June 23, 24, 25) 795 sorties were made (1.5 sorties per day for one aircraft, including faulty ones), 53 enemy aircraft were reported shot

down. (337) There is no doubt that behind these figures there are quite real losses of the Luftwaffe. In particular, it was in the zone of action of the 43rd IAD fighters (Minsk and its northwestern suburbs) that one of the most remarkable events of the first week of the war in the air took place on June 24: seven Ju-87 dive bombers from the 8th Luftwaffe air corps were shot down in within one day (two more "laptezhniks" were shot down on June 24 near the city of Volkovysk, which may also be associated with the actions of the 162nd IAP of the 43rd IAD). (338) In total, by the end of the month (and without taking into account the losses on June 22!) the Germans lost in the Western Front zone "from enemy influence and for unknown reasons" 10 twin-engine bombers, 17 dive Ju-87 and 16 Me-110; and these are only irretrievable losses, not counting the damaged cars. In addition, 19 Bf-109 fighters were also shot down, but a significant part of these losses can, it seems to me, be credited to the gunners of Soviet bombers. On the other hand,

the result of the combat work of the 43rd IAD - if we evaluate it from the point of view of the fulfillment of the main tasks of fighter aviation - turns out to be completely depressing. Soviet bombers were enemy fighters, ~~destroyed by aircraft were not~~ extremely "deficient" pilots and navigators in the war. The main object, which the 43rd IAD was put to protect, was destroyed: *"In the air, the complete dominance of enemy aircraft, the city of Minsk was subjected to repeated bombardment during the day by waves of 8 to 50 aircraft. There are big fires and destruction in the city. The buildings of the headquarters of the front and the headquarters of the Air Force were badly damaged by direct hits of air bombs.* (339) This is how the consequences of a massive strike by Luftwaffe bombers

on the capital of Belarus are described in the evening Operative report of the headquarters of the Western Front of June 24. IN

in the recollections of eyewitnesses, this event was imprinted as a
apocalypse:

"... Scattered like fluffs are the stones that lined the streets ... At the intersection of Sovetskaya and Uritsky streets, overturned tram cars lay, which turned into a mass grave of people of all ages ... The entire center of Minsk was destroyed. Already by noon, the water supply and electricity were out of order. While there was water, firefighters tried to fight the fire. But the blazing bonfire, into which the enemies had turned the city, flared up more and more... The glow from the Minsk fires could be seen at a distance of 10 kilometers from the city... The impression was that a volcano had erupted..." (340) In the Soviet era about the devastating bombardment of Minsk 24-25 June 1941 tried not to remember once again. And if they

did remember, then with the obligatory indication of the "correct reason" for the lack of proper opposition: *"As it turned out later, our fighter aircraft, based near Minsk, were destroyed at airfields, only a few pilots managed to take to the air."* (340) Today, when many archival funds have become available, it becomes even more difficult to find out the fate of the aircraft of the 43rd IAD. It is clear that there was no question of any "destruction of fighter aircraft based near Minsk" at the airfields: on the morning of June 22, at the time of the "sudden treacherous attack", the regiments of the 43rd IAD were based east of Berezina, 400 km from the border. The

consequences of the first enemy air raid on the Minsk Loshchitsa airfield are described in the document (combat report of the division headquarters) as follows: *"Enemy aircraft in the amount of 9 bombers bombed the Loshchitsa airfield. From a direct hit, one "seagull" and two barrels of gasoline burned down. Personnel - no casualties. The airport is fine. The village of Loshchitsa is on fire.* (341) The second (and last I found) documentary evidence of a bombing attack on the 43rd IAD fighter airfield refers to the last day of June 41st. At 22.30 on June 30, Major Churikov reported to the headquarters of the Air Force of the front (tape on a telegraph form): *"Enemy aircraft were raided at the Orsha airfield in the amount of 13 pieces. bombing*

the following damage was caused: one hangar was badly damaged, two hangars were slightly damaged. One oil heater was slightly damaged. Damaged (not destroyed, but damaged. - M.S.) aircraft: 1 "instant", 1 "gull". 1 person killed, 2 injured. The raid lasted from 15.20 to 17.00. (342) Nevertheless, the

number of combat-ready aircraft in the regiments of the 43rd IAD was rapidly declining. Judging by the combat report of the headquarters of the 43rd IAD dated 20.00 on June 25, mentioned above, in the 160th IAP, out of 60, only 28 "combat aircraft" remained (it can be assumed that the drafters of the report denoted serviceable aircraft with this term), in the 161st IAP - 37 out of 59, in the 163rd IAP - 31 out of 56. By June 30, 20, 29 and 22 combat aircraft remain in these regiments, respectively. (343) In other words, more than a hundred fighters were lost in a week. Where are they lost? Shot down in

air battles? The report "On the Combat Work of the 43rd Air Division for 6 Months of the Great Patriotic War" is accompanied by a summary of "Material losses in regiments from June 22 to August 10, 41." There is no separate data for June, but, taking into account that already on July 2-3, the 161st IAP and 163rd IAP were withdrawn for reorganization and no longer participated in hostilities, you can use the data from this report for evaluation (in any case, the losses for June cannot be greater than the losses in the period up to August 10). So, "shot down in air combat" 8 aircraft in each of these two regiments. Not a single one was shot down by anti-aircraft guns. Not a single one returned from the mission (at least not in the summary). "Destroyed at the airfield" 19 aircraft (11 in the 161st IAP and 8 in the 163rd IAP). And another 76 aircraft lost in accidents and disasters!

(344) Are there many accidents in 10 - 12 days? No less surprising is the structure of aircraft losses in the 160th IAP. This regiment fought on its "seagulls" until the end of July (it left for reorganization only on August 3). Losses are as follows: 10 aircraft were shot down in air combat, 11 did not return from a combat mission, there were no shot down by anti-aircraft fire. In accidents and catastrophes, 26 cars were broken (but this is still 43 days). But in the line "destroyed at the airfield" is the number 47. When and where did such a "sudden annihilating strike on the airfield" take place? In combat reports for June (see above), it was barely possible to count only two "seagulls" burned on the ground; in

It should be noted that three fighter regiments included in the 43rd IAD in July (32nd IAP, 401st IAP, 170th IAP) lost only 1 (one) aircraft on the ground until August 10. As a

plausible (in my subjective opinion) hypothesis, I can offer the following: the compilers of the report had to "bring the balance". The balance of the 160th IAP did not converge especially strongly, because this regiment received an additional 33 I-153s during the course of hostilities (most likely, these "seagulls" were transferred to a really fighting regiment from other, defeated and disbanded, parts of the Air Force of the front). (345) The authors of the document had to use a fail-safe method - to hit the airfields ...

2.10. Crossings on the Berezina

“12.50 29.6.41 To all formations of the Air Force of the Western Front. Immediately destroy tanks and crossings in the area of Bobruisk, Pavlov, Tayursky in echeloned groups by all means. Conveyed by Colonel Sviridov. All units stationed at the airfields of Borovskoye, Shatalovo, Shaikovka, Smolensk and others, immediately hand over. (346)

In addition to the headquarters of the 3rd DBAK, other formations of the bomber aviation of the Western Front received telegrams of a similar content. With this order begins a short history of one of the most dramatic episodes of the first weeks of

the war. The breakthrough of the 3rd Panzer Division of the Model to Bobruisk and the crossing of the Berezina by the Germans, which began on the morning of June 29, overturned the last hopes of the Red Army command to stabilize the situation on the Western Front. Most likely, no one hoped to save the formations of the front surrounded in the region of Bialystok and Minsk, but at that very time formations of the Second Strategic Echelon were advancing to the line of the Western Dvina and Dnieper in a forced march (this component of the grandiose strategic regrouping of the Red Army began at the end of May and was supposed, according to pre-war plans, to end in the first ten days of July). The appearance of German troops on the eastern bank of the Berezina meant that the enemy would be able to reach the proposed defensive line before it could be occupied and equipped by the armies of the Second Strategic Echelon. Since there were no combat-ready troops (except for the scattered remnants of the 4th Army and local formations) in the Bobruisk area, aviation became the last “straw” that the Soviet command could still count on. The German command also

appreciated the opportunities that had opened up and were not going to miss them. With incredible speed, the JG-51 fighter squadron was relocated to the line of the Berezina River, and then other fighter units. Soviet airfields, as they say, did not have time to cool down from

the flames of bonfires from documents and aircraft burned during the hasty departure, as dozens of Messerschmitts landed on them.

Already at 18.30 on June 29, reconnaissance of the Western Front discovers *"up to 20 Me-109s at the Bobruisk airfield."* (347) On June 30, JG-51 fighters flew 157 sorties (approximately 1.5 per serviceable aircraft) and claimed an unusually large number of victories - 115 Soviet aircraft shot down "in the Bobruisk area" (and another 22 aircraft were declared by the 4th group squadrons as "shot down at the front to the Berezina River"). Mölders himself and the commander of the 1st squadron group G. Joppien

reported that day about five victories each. (260, 367) These figures, repeated many times in many publications, gave rise to rumors about a grandiose battle in the air, "air Verdun", etc. Documents of Soviet air units and formations show a more modest scale of the events of June 30, 1941. And what forces of the Western Front Air Force could impose a great air battle on the enemy?

Almost only the number remained from **the 12th dietary supplement**. By June 30, the division had two regiments: the 128th BAP, in which out of the 40 initial ones there were about 20-25 SBs in combat readiness, and the 43rd BAP, which did not have time to re-equip, in which a dozen "newest" » Su-2 and two dozen antediluvian RZETs. At the same time, one should also take into account the fact that the remnants of the division were based on airfields near the Western Dvina (Betskaya, Beshenkovichi, Vitebsk) and more than 200 km separated them from the crossings near Bobruisk (see Map No. 5). Surprisingly, the crews of the 12th BAD took some (and taking into account the

available forces - and very active) participation in the battle over Bobruisk: *"Operative report No. in the period from 14.00 to 23.00 on 30.6.41, she fought against tanks and motorized parts of the enemy in the Bobruisk area. 46 sorties were made* (this number included sorties to the area northeast of Minsk, and sorties of I-15 "attack aircraft"

from the 215th BAP. - M.S.). 2. 43 BAP: - at 16.45 3 RZET planes bombarded a small column of tanks on the road Bobruisk, St. Roads with H=600m

FAB-50.

- at 16.55 3 Su-2 aircraft bombarded the bridge over the river. Ptich near Glussk (45 km southwest of Bobruisk). The bombs fell to the left [of the bridge] 30-50 m. 12 FAB-50s were dropped. - at

17.40, 3 RZET aircraft bombarded vehicles in the Osipovich area (45 km north-west of Bobruisk) from H = 700m. Dropped 18 FAB-50. - at 18.00 2 Su-2 aircraft flying to the

Bobruisk area due to bad weather on the route returned to their airfield.

1 Su-2 and 1 RZET did not return from the combat mission, sat down forcedly (presumably) ... 4. 128 BAP in the period

from 12.00 to 22.00 fought enemy tanks and motorized mechanized units in the Bobruisk area. Made 22 sorties. A report on the completion of the task by the time the summary was compiled was not received ... " (348)

The 13th dietary supplement by the time the Germans crossed the Berezina was in the following condition:

"Order (b / n) dated 29.6.41, headquarters of 13 BAD, N. Serebryanka."

1. With 121 BAPs, concentrate 125 BAPs and 130 BAPs at the Novaya Serebryanka and Church airfields.

97 BAP to leave in the former organization, Minki airfield. 2. From 24

BAPs, form a regiment on the Pe-2. Basing and retraining to be carried out at the Dubrovka site with basing from the Olsufevskaya airbase. 3. Send all flight and technical personnel not

included in the combat crew crew to new formations and retraining in the city of Kalinin. (349) By that time, the division had already lost the commanders of two regiments: on June 24,

the commander of the 125th BAP, Major Konets, died during an enemy bombardment of the airfield, on June 27, the commander of the 121st BAP, a veteran of the Spanish war, Colonel Doyar, did not return from a combat mission (reconnaissance of the enemy on the Pe-2 aircraft). (350) On June 28, in a summary signed by the chief of staff of the 13th BAD, only 22 Su-2s and 35 SBs were included in the list of serviceable aircraft. As for the brand new Pe-2s that ended up at the airfields of Bobruisk and Novaya Serebryanka by the beginning of the war, their number in various

documents of the headquarters of the division and the air force of the front is 9, and 20, and

39 units. The number of combat-ready aircraft that the 13th BAD had, undoubtedly, was also affected by the hasty evacuation from the Bobruisk airfield, captured by the advanced units of the 3rd Wehrmacht Panzer Division in the afternoon of June 28. There are different estimates of the number and technical condition of combat aircraft left at this airfield. The former division commander in his memoirs describes this evacuation as follows:

"... We are landing. Not a soul at the airport. Then I see: a man comes out of the forest. I recognize in him the navigator of the 24th Red Banner Regiment Tikhonov. - Where

are the people?

"Everyone left at dawn," he replies. - Why didn't they overtake these planes? I point to cars stationed on the outskirts of the airfield.

- Faulty. There are no engines. Who is in charge of the evacuation? -

Commander of the airfield battalion Musienko. We are ordered burn out defective planes. - Right.

Now get down to business. The evacuation, apparently, took place in a hurry, the wind carried across the field scraps of some papers that did not have time to burn ... " (301)

We didn't have time to burn not only papers. In the Opersvodka of the headquarters of the 13th BAD dated 18.00 on June 28 we read: *"125 BAP with H = 1400-1500 m bombarded fuel depots at the Bobruisk airfield with 8 SB aircraft. Warehouses are not blown up..." (351)* Late in the evening, another attempt was made (which, we note, once again proves that Polynin's division differed for the better from many others) to "finish off" their own planes at the Bobruisk airfield: *"One Sat at 20.00 28.6 made a sortie to destroy the aircraft remaining at the Bobruisk airfield, dropped from a height of 100m (!!!) 84 pcs. ZAB, 12 pcs. AO-15, 2 pcs. ZAB-50 (it is not clear where all this fit on one SB. - M.S.). Aircraft hits were noted. From the airfield, it was fired upon by strong anti-aircraft fire and attacked by two Me-109s. The aircraft has 7 holes from FOR fire. (352)* If only

so, from a height of 100 meters, with a hail of incendiary bombs, and at enemy airfields ...

The description of the combat operations of the division on June 30 is somewhat different in different documents. From 5 o'clock in the morning until late in the evening, the 13th BAD carried out 46 - 50 sorties that day, bombing attacks were carried out on crossings on the Berezina in the Shatkovo area (10 km north of Bobruisk), Bobruisk, Domanovo. Direct hits noted. One of the documents states that *"the crossing near Bobruisk was destroyed in 3 hours."* (353) Two Su-2s from the dozens of the 97th BAP, bombed over the bridge near Bobruisk, were hit and made an emergency landing on their territory; the losses of the consolidated 121st BAP turned out to be much greater: *"4 SBs were shot down, in addition, for unknown reasons, 2 Pe-2s and 1 SB did not*

return to their airfield." (354) A very detailed Operations Report No. 9 of the headquarters of the 121st BAP states by 17.30 on June 30 that *"the goal was achieved, during the day the enemy did not cross the Berezina."* True, from the further description of the events it follows that not a single bomb (at least until 17.00) was dropped on the crossings:

"Nine" under the command of Captain Brave in the period from 8.40 to 9.40 reconnoitered and bombarded the firing positions of ZA in the Bobruisk region from a height of 2000 m. No crossings along the Berezina River were found ... Nikiforov's link flew out to bomb the crossing in the Bobruisk region, but the latter was not found. Bombs were dropped at 12.50 on the landing site near Gleb-Rudnya, 12 km south of Bobruisk, the airfield was attacked from a height of 2000m ... Mitronin's link, flying on a mission to bomb the crossing near Bobruisk, was attacked Me-109 and upset. Bombs were dropped on their territory to "non-explosion". The pilot Kasyanov returned, there is no information about the rest of the crews ... " (355)

As in previous days, **the 3rd DBAK was the most active**, which was also facilitated by the fact that the distance from the airfields of the Smolensk air hub to the target of attack decreased by 2-3 times in one week ... , by 22.0030.6.41

1. Parts of the corps during 30.6 conducted aerial reconnaissance of airfields and the movement of enemy motorized units. A second sortie was made to destroy tanks in the Orsha area (so in the text, but on June 30 there were no German tanks in that area. - M.S.). 2. 96 DBAP

from 14.00 to 15.00 made 11 sorties, of which 6 aircraft did not return to their airfields. Bombing was carried out on enemy motorized parts in the area southwest of Bobruisk and on the Glussk-Bobruisk and Glusha-Bobruisk roads. 3 Me-109s shot down. 3. 207 DBAP from 18.00 to

19.00 made 8 sorties on crossings near the river. Berezina and enemy tanks south of Bobruisk. 2 planes did not return to the airfield.

4. 212 DBAP from 15.30 to 16.30 bombarded enemy motorized units southwest of Bobruisk and crossings on the Berezina River with 26 crews. Crossings on the river. The Berezina is covered by a strong small-caliber FOR, which is also installed, according to the crews, on the eastern shore. 2 crews did not drop bombs due to strong opposition FOR. 9 aircraft did not return to their

airfield, including 2 crew returned to their airport. 5 Me-109 fighters shot down.

Of the previously shot down crews and landed on the territory occupied by the enemy, 12 crews returned to the regiment. Two gunners-

radio operators were killed. 5. 98 DBAP from 13.56 to 17.55 made 18 sorties for bombing - with one link against tanks in the Pleshchanitsa area (60 km north of Minsk, the bombing strike on this area was planned by the front air force command the day before June 30. - M.S.) and five links against enemy troops on the Glussk-Bobruisk road and the forest southwest of Bobruisk. 7 planes did not return. 2 Me-109s shot

6. 51 DBAP (this regiment from the 2nd DBAK was transferred the day before to the 3rd DBAK) at 17.55 attacked enemy tanks in the Glusha area (25 km west of Bobruisk) with one link. All planes returned to their airfield. 7. Weather ... " (356)

The 51st long-range bomber regiment (by the beginning of the war there were 58 serviceable DB-3f in the regiment) was not the only replenishment in

composition of the armed forces of the front. By the end of June, two air divisions were relocated to the Western Front: the 23rd SAD (headquarters at the Zubovo airfield, 40 km north of Mogilev) and the 47th SAD (Borovskoye airfield, 60 km southeast of Smolensk). Theoretically, there were considerable forces there: three bomber regiments, from 62 to 77 (according to various documents) serviceable SB bombers in the 23rd SAD; two regiments, 47 serviceable bombers (including 9 Pe-2s) in the 47th SAD. (357) In practice, their participation in the execution of the order (*"immediately destroy tanks and crossings in the Bobruisk region with all their forces, in echelons, in groups"*) was reduced to the following:

"47 GARDEN. On an additional assignment, 8 BAPs, consisting of 9 SBs, at 13.37 and 140 BAPs, consisting of 14 SBs, from 13.50 to 14.10 bombarded enemy troops and crossings of motorized mechanized troops in the Bobruisk area. Did not return to their airfield on 2 Sat..."

23 GARDEN. 214 BAP unit (i.e. 3 aircraft. - M.S.) bombarded the enemy in Bobruisk. Dropped 18 FAB-100. The link was attacked by a nine Me-109 ... (text break)". (358) The arithmetic of the

actions of the Soviet bomber aviation in the Bobruisk area on June 30, 1941 is presented in Table 14.

Таблица 14

		Наличие с-тов к 30 июня	Число вылетов	Потери
12-я САД	128-й БАП	20—25	22	?
	43-й БАП	30—35	9	2
13-я САД	24-й БАП	9—20	?	2
	97-й БАП	20—22	10	2
	121, 125, 130-й БАП	30—35	39	5
3-й ДБАК	96-й ДБАП	26—30	11	6
	98-й ДБАП	17—28	18	7
	207-й ДБАП	10—18	8	2
	212-й ДБАП	35—40	26	9
	51-й ДБАП	58	3	0
47-я САД	8-й БАП	19	9	0
	140-й БАП	28	14	2
23-я САД	214-й БАП	17—24	3	3 (?)
ВСЕГО:		319—382	172	40 (?)

As you can see, the battle in the air over Bobruisk on June 30, 1941 did not become the day of the most active operations of the bomber aviation of the Western Front. On average, about one sortie was made for two serviceable aircraft; the total number of sorties is less than it was on June 22 (263 sorties), even less than the 3rd DBAC alone performed on June 26 (254 sorties). Losses - both in absolute and relative terms (23% of the number of sorties) - also cannot be considered something out of the ordinary. Only a three-fold "overestimation factor" in the reports of German fighters from JG-51 can be considered extraordinary for June 41st.

As always, it is more difficult to evaluate not the mathematical, but the operational result of an air battle. There is no need to argue that the phrase *"during the day the enemy did not make crossings across the Berezina"* strongly embellishes the harsh reality. In Operational Report No. 12 of the headquarters of the Western Front, compiled by 20.00 on June 30, the reality of that day is described as follows:

"At 4 o'clock in the morning, the enemy, having built pontoon crossings, transported up to 18 tanks to the eastern coast (12 in the Bobruisk region and 6 in the Shatkovo region). An attempt to transport the infantry after the tanks was repulsed in the morning. After a fierce battle, by 19:30, the enemy managed to transport up to 93 tanks and armored vehicles and several dozen motorcyclists. A large number of crossed tanks headed north towards Mogilev ... " (359)

And it would be difficult to expect a different, much better result. After carefully rereading all the above reports and reports, we will find with some surprise that the bridges and crossings on the Berezina were named as a direct object of attack only in four (!) Cases: 10 sorties of the Su-2 (97th BAP), 8 sorties of 207- th DBAP, 26 sorties of the 212th DBAP, 23 sorties of two regiments of the 47th SAD; everyone else was bombing, perhaps no less important, but different targets. Of

course, with such a number of departures of "horizontal" bombers (and even taking into account the level of pre-war training of their crews) it was impossible to destroy (and exclude the possibility of restoration!) The crossings. And it was up to the ground forces to stop the German tanks crossing the Berezina. What they (mainly the 21st Army of the Second Strategic Echelon) did, and stopped for a long time: the enemy's attempts to cross the Dnieper at Mogilev, Bykhov and Rogachev were repulsed. Moreover, on July 13-14, Soviet troops crossed the Dnieper and launched a counterattack on Bobruisk - one of the very first successful counterattacks of the Red Army in 1941. Fierce fighting in the interfluvium of the Berezina and the Dnieper continued until mid-August, when the general aggravation of the situation at the junction of the Western, Central and South-Western fronts forced the troops of the 21st Army to begin retreating to the east ... Another, completely

connected with the history of the battle in the air over Bobruisk scanty in its practical significance, but which, without exaggeration, has become a popularly known episode.

We are talking about the novel by K. Simonov "The Living and the Dead", in which the scene of the merciless destruction of eight heavy Soviet TB-3 bombers was very vividly described. In a cloudless June sky

a pair of "Messers" appear and, practically without resistance, "joking and playing", shoots one helpless giant after another. The undoubted literary talent of the author, combined with the most powerful state PR (yes, the words of this were not yet known, but the novel by the Hero of Socialist Labor, secretary of the board of the Union of Soviet Writers, winner of six Stalin and one Lenin Prizes was included in the compulsory school curriculum, filmed and declared the greatest work of Soviet literature, "War and Peace" of the 20th century") led to the fact that this scene was remembered by millions of people and for many decades took the place in the mass consciousness of a certain "reference" idea of \u200b\u200bSoviet aviation at the beginning of the war: the hopeless technical backwardness of "flying coffins" coupled with the selfless, suicidal heroism of the pilots.

By the way. For Simonov himself, everything was very serious^[45], and he did not invent this scene - he sincerely believed that he saw it with his own eyes. The story of the death of eight TB-3s flying during the day, without fighter cover, to bomb crossings on the Berezina near Bobruisk, also appears in memoirs published two years before Simonov's death ("Different days of the war. Diary of a writer").

"... I witnessed a picture that I will never forget. For ten minutes, I saw how the Messerschmitts shot down six of our TB-3s one after another. "Messerschmitt" went into the tail of the TB-3, it began to smoke and went down. "Messerschmitt" went into the tail of the next TB-3, a rattle was heard, then the TB-3 began to burn and fall. Falling, they went very far, and high black columns of smoke stood in the forest on both sides of the road ...

We hadn't even driven a kilometer when very close, right above us, the Messerschmitt shot down another one - the seventh TB-3. During this battle, the pilot-captain jumped to his feet in the back of the car and cursed with terrible words, waved his arms, and tears flowed down his face. I cried before when I saw those first six planes on fire. And now he could no longer cry and simply turned away so as not to see how the German would finish this seventh plane. "Ready," said the captain, who also turned away and got into the back. I turned around. The black column of smoke seemed to stand very close

from U.S...

As soon as we left the highway, another air battle took place above us. Two "Messerschmitts" attacked TB-3, this time going to Bobruisk completely alone. Heavy gunfire began in the air. One of the Messerschmitts came very close to the tail of the TB-3 and set it on fire. The plane, smoking, went down. "Messerschmitt" followed him, but suddenly, tumbling, began to fall. One parachute separated from the Messerschmitt and five from the TB-3. There was a strong wind, and the parachutes were carried to the side. Where the TB-3 fell - two or three kilometers towards Bobruisk - there were deafening explosions ... " (360)

Many years later, while preparing Different Days of the War for publication, Simonov tried to compare his memoirs with archival documents; he really worked with documents from the headquarters of the Air Force of the Western Front and the 3rd DBAC (quotations appear in the text of the memoirs, and they are completely accurate, even with real clerical notes in the margins). It is easy to see that the writer made a mistake in just one letter: he confused DB-3 with TB-3 (he refers to information about the losses of the 212th DBAP, even establishes the names of the pilots of one of the downed aircraft of this regiment, erroneously calling them the crew of the "downed TB "). And if fighter pilots were often mistaken in determining the type of enemy aircraft that they seemed to have shot down (or, at least, they saw in the crosshairs of the sight from a distance of 100 - 200 meters), then it is not surprising that a purely civilian a man, and even in a state of extreme stress, did not distinguish a 4-engine bomber from a 2-engine one in the sky ...

In reality, the 3rd DBAK included two regiments (1st TBAP and 3rd TBAP) equipped with TB-3 heavy bombers. Already on the night of June 23 , *the 3rd TBAP began a long (and by no means so pathetic!) History of the combat use of this giant ship: enemy troops in the area of Sejny, Sopotskin, Dombrovo, Lukow, Radzin, Vengruv. Dropped 468 FAB-100 (estimate the number of bombs dropped by just two squadrons! - M.S.) and 108 SAB-5 (small-caliber lighting bomb). There are no losses.*" (361)

With tactically competent (i.e. night) use, it was a very tenacious combat aircraft, and a huge bomb bay made it possible to drop serious amounts on the enemy's head

"payload". By the end of June, the losses of the 1st and 3rd TBAPs were significantly less than in any other regiment of the 3rd DBAK (and of all the air forces of the Western Front as a whole): in the 1st of 41 ships, 36 remained in service, in 3th out of 52 remained 41. (362)

Of course, such low losses are explained primarily by the low intensity of the use of heavy (and, in fact, night) bombers in the first weeks of the war. In the report "On the results of the combat work of the 3rd TBAP from 22.6 to 22.7.1941" it is said that the regiment made a total of 185 sorties in a month with a total flying time of 987 hours. 54 min., and the entire raid is designated as night. 269 tons of bombs were dropped, including 61 FAB-500, 314 FAB-250, 952 FAB-100, as well as "79 bales of leaflets". 4 enemy fighters were declared shot down (it is especially difficult to believe in the authenticity of this message). 17 tons of ammunition, 6 tons of fuel, 38 tons of "technical equipment", 321 personnel were delivered to the rear of the combat zone. (363)

The loss of the flight crew of the regiment for the month amounted to 20 killed (including 11 gunners) and 28 wounded, 8 crew members were missing. During 185 sorties in the air, only 9 ships were lost: 5 were shot down by enemy fighters, 3 by anti-aircraft guns, and 1 by our own fighters. 6 machines were put out of action by the enemy at airfields, another 6 were broken in accidents and disasters; 22 cases of non-fulfillment of a combat mission, 12 cases of forced landings outside the airfield were recorded. (364) Further, the regiment commander, Colonel Zaryansky, gives a very harsh assessment to his subordinates: *disasters are the result of indiscipline and*

"Accidents And neglect of the elementary rules of NPP-38 (manual on flight operations) ... Particularly shameful cases are cases of loss of orientation due to indiscipline, poor navigational training and lack of control in training navigators and especially young shooters-scorers ...

Each case of non-fulfillment of a combat mission should be dealt with with the entire flight crew, bringing the obvious perpetrators to severe liability, up to and including being brought to trial by a military tribunal. Warn commanders and chiefs of all levels that for inactivity in restoring order and performing military duty

I will be demoted and put on trial by a military tribunal as accomplices of the enemy, weakening the combat power of the Red Army Air Force.
(365)

And, finally, about the daytime flight of the TB-3 bombers on June 30th. There really was such a flight. And there were losses - however, not as big as in the novel, and there were by no means two "Messers":

"Combat report No. 02 headquarters 3 TBAP, Shaikovka airfield, to 20.00 1.7.41

"Of the four ships that did not return from the combat mission on 30.6.41, the deputy squadron commander st. Lieutenant Pozhidaev, who officially reported the following. Takeoff at 16.18,

bombing time from 18.05 to 18.12 with H=1000 m. In the target area, the ships were attacked by 15 Me-109 fighters. From the burning TB-3, only the commander of the ship, Pozhidaev, escaped (he was wounded in the leg and burned his face), the rest died ... According to the report of Art. Lieutenant Pozhidaeva, the second slave ship was also shot down by fighters. The ship burned down, 4 people from the crew jumped out on parachutes, the rest of the crew died. There is no information about the last two ships that did not return from the mission.

Conclusion: On a combat mission to bombard an accumulation of enemy tanks in the Bobruisk area at night (as in the text, although 6 pm in June is a clear day), 29 ships flew from 30.6 to 1.7. 23 ships returned to the Shaikovka airfield, they are sitting on a forced landing in the Vyazma area (a very strange place for an emergency landing, given that Vyazma is much further from Bobruisk than the airfields of the Smolensk air hub. - M.S.) 2 ships shot down by enemy fighters in the target area 4 ship." (366)

Chapter

3 UNACCOUNTED LOSS

3.1. Sapienti sat

The book written five years ago "On peacefully sleeping airfields"

I ended up with the following conclusions:

1. *The main element of the "aircraft-pilot" system is the pilot. This is true even today, in the era of on-board computers and homing missiles. This conclusion becomes all the more true in relation to combat aviation of the 1940s.* 2. *The combat training of a pilot is an inseparable alloy of skill and desire. The ability to fly, shoot, bomb, find,*

evade - and the willingness to sacrifice one's life for the victory of one's squadron, one's army, one's country. In the Stalinist army, it was equally bad with both the first and second components of combat training. As a result, the combat effectiveness of the Armed Forces (in particular, aviation) turned out to be surprisingly low: the lack of proper motivation was aggravated by the low level of flight, rifle, and tactical training.

3. *For successful combat use in the "aircraft - a pilot is needed" system, characteristics to the comparable airplane with tactical and technical performance characteristics of enemy aircraft. The boundaries of the range of this "comparability" are very wide. A small (10 - 15%) advantage or, on the contrary, a lag in one or another parameter is not significant and can almost always be compensated by choosing the best tactics.*

4. *The effectiveness and efficiency of the entire Air Force system is even less dependent on the performance characteristics of aircraft and is even more determined by the TACTICS of the combat use of individual elements of the system, their interaction with each other and with ground forces; the operation of the communication and warning service, ground technical services, the development of the airfield base and, above all, the availability of competent leadership. Almost all of the above cannot be bought, stolen, copied. All this must be created within your country, your army. The*

possibility of creating all this is determined to a decisive extent by what is usually called the "human factor".

5. Stalin (by this name we will call the top military-political leadership of the USSR for brevity) at least from the mid-30s concentrated all his efforts (and all the resources of the richest country in the world) on comprehensive preparations for a future war. In particular, the goal was to create the most powerful military aviation in the world. 6. The sub-

problem of creating material and technical means of warfare was solved best and most successfully. In particular, an aviation industry was created that was capable of producing combat aircraft in quantities inaccessible to any European country; Numerous research and design organizations have been established. The success was due to an unprecedented concentration of material and financial resources, as well as the amazing myopia (if not venality) of Western politicians, who allowed Stalin to turn the stolen financial resources into the latest military technologies.

7. As a result, by the beginning of 1939, Stalin had a huge (many times more than any of the participants in the world war that began that year) at his disposal, the number of aircraft that, in their performance characteristics, were at least as good as the best combat aircraft in the

world. 8. The issues of creating the system itself, called "military aviation", were solved much worse. There were many reasons for this. The systemic approach, in principle, is difficult to reconcile with the Marxist-Leninist worldview, based on the absolutization of individual particulars.

The general level of education and culture of our collective "Stalin" was unacceptably low. Finally, the personnel potential was completely different: if the presence (and sometimes leadership) of "socially alien", non-party specialists, real engineers and scientists of the old Russian school was still allowed in the research institutes and design bureaus, then in the leadership of the army, aviation, military industry to By the end of the 1930s, there were no "strangers" anymore.

Stalin's "nominees" were, at best, capable of very intensive, but extremely inefficient work. At worst, they were illiterate crooks, intriguers and upstarts,

who in a normal society would not be trusted to lead a brigade of scavengers.

9. Thus, by the beginning of World War II, a completely paradoxical situation had developed, almost indescribable in normal human language: a lot of planes, a lot of pilots, a lot of airfields, a lot of aircraft factories, a lot of aviation schools and flight schools. At the same time, there are not enough gas stations, hoses and funnels, batteries and auto starters, radio stations and telephone wires everywhere. There are the latest high-speed anti-aircraft guns, but there are no shells for them, there are unique systems for pressurizing fuel tanks with inert gas, but there is no nitrogen at airfields, there is a huge aircraft fleet, but there are no tractors for clearing snow from airfields, there is a huge network of flight schools, but cadets are busy with stepping and unloading of wagons, there is the largest oil production in Europe, but there is no high-octane aviation gasoline ... In short, everything is there - but the real combat capability of military aviation

negligible.

10. On the eve of the war, Stalin even more extended to aviation, the aviation industry and science the specific "Stalinist methods" of leadership, administrative pressure, mass repressions, planting an atmosphere ^{those.} of fear, sycophancy and bloody intrigues. As a result, the established scientific teams were destroyed, the best specialists were physically destroyed (or permanently removed from creative work), the natural process of updating the Soviet Air Force aircraft fleet on the eve of the war was slowed down for 2-3 years.

11. A few weeks and days before the start of the war with Germany, Stalin exterminated a large and probably the best part of the command staff of the Air Force. The reasons why it was precisely in the spring of 1941 that the leadership of military aviation became the next victim of another wave of mass terror could not be clarified. The consequences of this massacre - in terms of further demoralization of the Armed Forces - are obvious and do not require explanation.

12. As of June 22, 1941, even that part (about half) of Soviet aviation that was deployed on the territory of the western military districts many times exceeded enemy aviation in all quantitative parameters (number

aircraft, crews, squadrons, home airfields). The technical condition and performance characteristics of combat aircraft were satisfactory, generally meeting the requirements of the war. In any case, the material part of the Soviet air regiments was not inferior to the aviation of the Western allies, in battles with which the Luftwaffe suffered heavy losses (France) or heavy losses and defeat (England). 13. The myth of the "surprise attack", cultivated in Soviet

historiography for many years, is fictional from beginning to end. Not to mention the fact that the Combat Aviation Manuals in force at that time provided for the necessary system of measures to exclude the possibility of a "surprise strike" on home airfields, all western districts, all military aviation formations received the necessary orders before the start of hostilities to bring units into full combat readiness. 14. From the very first days of the war, the inability of Soviet aviation to effectively

conduct an air war became obvious. A huge aircraft fleet was used with the "efficiency of a steam locomotive" - a small number of sorties, lack of coordination of actions and communication with ground forces, unsatisfactory work of the logistics system, impotence and lack of will of headquarters. In those sectors of the front (Belarus, the Baltic states), where the enemy ground forces delivered the main blow, a panic "relocation" to the rear began, which in fact was a mass desertion. 15. The inaction (in some cases, flight) of Soviet aviation allowed the enemy to bomb the battle formations of the ground troops of the Red Army almost

without hindrance, which was one of the reasons for the disorderly panic retreat, which, in turn, even more pushed the aviation commanders to make a decision on an urgent "relocation". Thus, a system with "positive feedback" was formed at lightning speed, the action of which ultimately led to the fact that a significant part of the aircraft fleet of the Air Force of the Western, Northwestern (to a lesser extent Southwestern) fronts was abandoned at airfields.

16. *In conditions of approximately numerical equality with the Soviet Air Force, German aviation received a decisive advantage due to the higher training and morale of the flight crew, due to the proven tactics of combat use and interaction with ground forces, due to the flawless operation of the communication and control system. Only the continuous build-up of forces as a result of the transfer of aviation units of the internal and Far Eastern districts, only the continuous formation of new air regiments allowed the command of the Soviet Air Force to strike back, to provide minimal air cover for ground troops.*

17. *The "blitzkrieg" in the air was thwarted for the same reason that the "blitzkrieg" on the ground did not take place: the Germans did not have time to "grind" more and more enemy units, did not have time to make up for the growing losses. On the other hand, as discipline, order and controllability were restored in the Soviet Air Force, as combat experience was gained by the flight and command personnel, the actions of Soviet aviation became more effective. Probably, by the autumn of 1942, a delicate balance of forces had developed in the air. However, the resources that the Soviet Union and its aviation spent to maintain this balance were many times higher than the costs and losses of the enemy. Right up to May 1945, the Soviet Air Force remained a huge, but ineffective mechanism of war. The source base, on the basis of which Aerodromes were written, consisted of collections of documents quite officially published in the early 90s, memoirs of war*

veterans (from marshals to sergeants) and monographic studies of Soviet and post-Soviet historians. The incompleteness and imperfection of the sources used are obvious.

The new book was written with the involvement of a significant (many thousands of pages) array of primary documents, many of which are being introduced into scientific circulation for the first time. In a number of cases, it was possible literally by the day and hour to trace the history of the defeat of some regiments and divisions of the Soviet Air Force. What new conclusions should be drawn after this? Which of the statements made five years ago should be changed, discarded, rewritten?

The shortest answer to these questions will consist of one word: NOTHING. New documents fully confirm the concept (hypothesis) presented earlier; moreover, they largely allow replacing general, qualitative assessments with quite specific, documented figures. If it is required to correct some theses, then for the most part - in the direction of "tightening" the conclusions formulated in the first book. So, the statement about "the widespread shortage of gas stations,

hoses, funnels and autostarters" turned out to be rather reckless (see paragraph 9). Not only "funnels and hoses", but also special gas-oil tankers, starters and compressors were available, and by no means in single, but in regular quantities. Memoir complaints about their absence appear either as a result of a later search for "good reasons" for the defeat, or they are a completely truthful description of the situation that developed AFTER the panic "relocation". Archival documents indisputably confirm the thesis that it was by no means the absence (small number) of technical

means of communication that led to the disruption of communications and controllability in the Soviet headquarters. *"The leading officers did not know (?) All the possibilities of radio communication and often, in the absence of [wired] telephone and telegraph communication between units, believed that there was no communication between them at all, despite the fact that radio facilities at that time were in full readiness and could provide transmission necessary orders and directives.* Let me remind you once again of what was stated in the same report "Communications in the Red Army Air Force during the Patriotic War from 22.6.41 to 1.10.43" (signed on November 2, 1943 by Lieutenant General Gvozdkov, head of the Communications Department of the KA Air Force Headquarters) the total number of radio stations with which the KA Air Force headquarters were equipped by the beginning of the war: 25 PAT, 351 RAF and 11 AK, 384 SSB and 5 AK.

The thesis about the impact of the "gasoline crisis" on combat training before the war and on the combat use of aviation during the war also needs serious clarification. Yes, indeed, the scale of production of high-octane aviation gasoline did not correspond either to the real capabilities of the country (the largest oil production in the Old World), or to the needs of those created at will.

Stalin's colossal Air Force. The release of high-octane aviation gasoline in the amount of 1.5% of the volume of oil produced in the country cannot but cause astonishment.

On the other hand, it was by no means the lack of gasoline that became the main "limiter" in the combat training of the flight personnel of the Soviet Air Force. It was not at all the lack of gasoline that led to the fact that, for example, in the 43rd IAD, for 2127 flight hours, there were only 55 air firing and 27 training air battles. To a greater or lesser extent, the same picture is observed in other units and formations: formally, arithmetically, the training raid is not so small (100 - 150 hours per year), but the real combat training (aerial shooting, bombing training, training air battles, long-range route flights) is reduced to a "trial minimum". The main reason for this state of affairs was not the lack of gasoline, but the irresponsibility of the leadership of the Air Force - from the very "top" to the level of divisions and regiments. The "sparing" mode of combat training from the very first days of the war turned into a mercilessly high level of losses of aircraft and flight

composition.

It was by no means gasoline that limited the combat use of aviation in the first years of the war. Judging by the report of the headquarters of the SC Air Force, for 12 months (from June 22, 1941 to July 1, 1942) 168 thousand fighter sorties, 70 thousand bomber sorties and 16 thousand attack aircraft sorties were carried out. (368) Considering (and with some overstatement in relation to the real consumption) the weight of refueling of one fighter and attack aircraft is equal to 330 kg, one bomber - 1500 kg, we get a figure of 170 thousand tons required to ensure such a number of **sorties**. In the next 12 months (from 1.7.42 to 1.7.43), the Soviet Air Force carried out 157,000 sorties of fighters, 49,000 bombers and 50,000 attack aircraft. Since the flights of the most "gluttonous consumers" (bombers) have become less, the total required consumption of gasoline has decreased to the mark of **145 thousand km**.

tons.

These figures are undoubtedly less than any available estimate of the production and consumption of aviation gasoline in the USSR. Thus, in accordance with the "Reference on the consumption of fuel and lubricants for the first two years of the war", prepared at the headquarters of the Air Force of the Spacecraft, in the first 12 months, 520 thousand tons of high-octane gasoline (B-74 and B-78) and 375 thousand tons of aviation gasoline were received

B-70; in the next 12 months, 472 and 196 thousand tons were received, respectively. (369) No, it was not the lack of gasoline that led to the fact that Soviet aviation carried out an average of 700 sorties per day, with many thousands of combat aircraft in service ... [46] —

Quite unexpected confirmation was received by the thesis that the results of the war in the air very little depend on the performance characteristics of aircraft (see paragraphs 3 and 4). Summing up all the information collected about the real victories and losses of Soviet fighters, it is possible to name several of the most successful fighter regiments with a fair degree of certainty. On June 22, three air units operated more actively and significantly more successfully than others: the 127th IAP (11th SAD, ZF Air Force), the 123rd IAP (10th SAD, ZF Air Force), the 67th IAP (21st S

The 67th IAP (regiment commander - Major Rudakov) completed 117 sorties during the day on June 22, claimed 13 and actually shot down 9 bombers of the Romanian Air Force (another bomber and two enemy fighters were seriously damaged and completed the flight with an emergency landing). The regiment was just as active in the future (in particular, on June 24, 126 sorties were completed, i.e. almost 3 per serviceable aircraft). Own losses on the first day of the war amounted to two aircraft, and in total until July 2 - 5 aircraft shot down in air battles. On the first day of the war, the 123rd IAP

(commander Major Surin, died in battle on June 22, 1941) entered into a confrontation with the best fighter squadron of the Luftwaffe (JG-51). The pilots of the regiment actually shot down and damaged about 10 - 12 enemy aircraft at the cost of losing 9 of their own in air battles. The 127th IAP (commander - Lieutenant Colonel Gordienko) completed more than 150 sorties on June 22, actually shot down and damaged about 10 German bombers and fighters, lost 12 aircraft in air battles (for the first day of the war, large losses in the air may well be considered one of the few objective indicators of combat activity). Both of these regiments (123rd and 129th) were based on the flanks of the Western Front, in the zone of the main attack of the enemy ground forces, and on the second day of the war they were swept away by a wave of retreat. If, however, we slightly expand the time frame and evaluate the performance of

Soviet fighters for the first 10 - 15 days of the war (i.e., in the period before the withdrawal of most Western air units

districts for reorganization to the rear), then five more regiments can be added to the named three regiments:

- 49th IAP (57th GARDEN, NWF Air Force), regiment commander - Major Nedelin. On June 22, the regiment was based in the Daugavpils (Dvinsk) region and practically did not participate in air battles on the first day of the war; in the future, the pilots of the regiment acted extremely actively, until July 16 they completed 1395 sorties, 21 downed enemy aircraft were announced;

- 160th IAP (regiment commander - Major Kostromin, died in battle on July 4) and 163rd IAP (commander - Major Lagutin). These two regiments were part of the 43rd IAD (ZF Air Force), on the first day of the war they were in the Orsha-Mogilev area, i.e. in the deep rear, they had no losses and victories; in the future, they bore the brunt of the air battles in the Western Front, in just three days (from June 23 to 25) they completed 550 sorties and actually shot down about 20 - 25 enemy aircraft; - 23rd IAP (commander - Colonel Sidorenko) and 28th IAP (commander - Major

Demidov) from the 15th SAD (Air Force of the South-Western Front). On the first day of the war, these two regiments did not achieve noticeable success, but later they became the most active (more than 800 sorties were completed by the end of June), and possibly the most productive fighter units on the Southwestern Front (23rd IAP announced 29, and the 28th IAP - 26 downed enemy aircraft). This list clearly lacks one more (perhaps two) participants. On June 22, at least 10 Junkers from KG-51 were shot down

in the Stryi, Stanislav area (in total, the squadron lost 15 aircraft irretrievably that day, and these were the largest losses among all Luftwaffe squadrons on the first day of the war). The 12th IAP (64th IAD) was based in that area, and it may very well be that it is the fighters of this regiment that are the "culprits" of such an outstanding event for June 22, 1941. And now let's see on which planes these air regiments entered the war. The 23rd and 28th fought on the latest MiGs, the 67th and 163rd fought on outdated donkeys. The 127th, 123rd and 160th were fully equipped with

"seagulls", the 49th fought mainly on the "gulls" (by June 22, there were 38 I-153 and 25 I-16 in the regiment), in the 12th IAP also mostly "seagulls" (47 I-153 and 19 I-16).

At the same time, there is no reason to doubt that the low-speed biplane I-153 was hopelessly outdated by the summer of 1941 and, in terms of the total performance characteristics, was the most "hopeless" among all types of Soviet fighters at the beginning of the war. However, it is not planes that are fighting, but pilots ...

The declassified documents finally close the discussion about the so-called. "surprise attack". With all certainty, it can be argued that this myth, cultivated in Soviet historiography for many decades, is fictional from beginning to end. What kind of "surprise" can we talk about in relation to aviation formations in which, starting from June 20, 1941, operational reports with numbers 1, 2, 3 are issued ... and in the reports it is stated that "units did not conduct combat operations, the aircraft were dispersed and operational airfields, in each regiment one squadron in readiness No. 2"? Where there were at least minimal signs of military discipline and order, the air units were raised on combat alert no later than 3-4 am on June 22, i.e. BEFORE the first enemy air raids[47] .

Strictly speaking, even the sacramental "1200, of which 800 are on the ground", translated from Russian into Russian, means that 85% of the Soviet aviation grouping in the Western theater of operations (six aircraft out of seven) did not suffer from the "first devastating strike" at all. And the next day after the "destructive blow", the Soviet Air Force outnumbered (moreover, in all sectors, except for the Western Front, they outnumbered many times) their opponent. Losses of aircrew - and this is the basis of the foundations of the combat capability of military aviation - during the bombing of airfields were completely isolated. The fact that the theme of "the destruction of Soviet aviation on the ground" is still present on the pages of newspapers, on TV screens (and even in "scientific monographs") should already be regarded not as a sociocultural, but rather as a medical phenomenon. Having freed the question of the losses of

the day of June 22 from the inappropriate halo of "fatefulness", we will nevertheless try to sum up some quantitative results of the hostilities of the first day of the war. Exact figures will never be established - and not only because the surviving primary documents are fragmentary, incomplete, often

drawn up retroactively, hundreds of kilometers from the scene of the event, contradict each other (and sometimes even themselves). The main problem is created by the need to identify losses FROM THE IMPACT OF THE ENEMY in the total array of losses. By the end of June, at the deserted airfields of the western districts, the Germans found a huge number of Soviet aircraft (various authors give numbers from 2.5 to 4 thousand) in varying degrees of "damage" - from completely serviceable to completely charred. Even the smallest of these figures (2.5 thousand) is three times more than the traditional "including 800 on the ground." That's just who and when "chained" these planes to

An almost insoluble mystery is the story of the four fighter regiments of the 9th SAD, in which there were about 350 aircraft on the morning of June 22, and on the morning of the next day they were gone, and no one knows exactly how many remained, but it seems that no more than 60 survived - 70 units. At the same time, it is known for certain that during the first strike of the enemy, the losses were zero (maybe single), and even by the middle of the day, losses on the ground were in the tens (and not hundreds at all), while the German fighters claimed only 8 "migs" shot down in the air (more on this in the previous chapter). The next issue is

the issue of "ground-damaged aircraft". In a normal (if only this word is applicable to war) situation, in a normal, i.e. belligerent army, damaged materiel is repaired and returned to service. The scale of this activity in combat aviation is evidenced, in particular, by the following figures: in the first 12 months of the war, front-line (not counting rear structures!) Repair shops carried out 6,660 current and 6,050 overhauls of aircraft, and 10,719 overhauls of aircraft engines were completed. (370) During the same period of time, "field repairs" (probably this term in the document of the SC Air Force Headquarters denotes the elimination of relatively minor damage and failures directly in the air regiments) repaired 51,579 aircraft (in other words, on average, each aircraft was repaired by several once). (371) All the more possible is the restoration repair of an aircraft that did not crash to the ground from a height of five kilometers, but was

damaged by bullets and fragments of bombs at the airfield. It makes sense here

look at the situation "on the other side of the front." Comparing the number of German aircraft declared in Soviet reports as "destroyed during a strike on an enemy airfield" with the actual number of irretrievable losses on the ground, we find an absolutely extraordinary, dozens of times (!) overestimation. Yes, of course, the Soviet system did not work without postscripts - but not to the same extent! Another explanation seems much more plausible: the thrifty Germans repaired and restored aircraft damaged on the ground, as a result of which, for two dozen damaged aircraft, there was one irretrievably decommissioned aircraft. Finally, one should not forget

about such a component of combat work as the evacuation of faulty materiel to the rear. Evacuation of damaged aircraft is possible. The aircraft is not made in the form of a solid cast iron, everything (wings, engine, landing gear, instruments and weapons) is unscrewed, undocked, removed; the weight of the heaviest unit (motor) then did not exceed 600 - 800 kg, i.e. was less than the carrying capacity of the collective farm "gazik". Evacuation is possible and practically - for example, in the ZhBD of the 126th IAP we read:

*"On August 20, 1941, enemy tank columns suddenly broke through the front in the Starodub area and rushed along the road to the south. By the end of the day, they were 10 km from the regiment's base airfield - the Semenovka airfield (now Ukraine, 10 km from the border with the Bryansk region. - M.S.). The Commander of the Air Force of the Central Front, Major General Vorozheykin, ordered the 126th regiment to immediately relocate to the Tolkanevka airfield, 18 km northwest of the city of Lgov (at least 180 km in a straight line) ... The regiment had 2 ZIS-5 vehicles at its disposal. The evacuation of faulty aircraft was entrusted to the senior engineer of the regiment, military engineer of the 3rd rank Grachev M.N., who coped with this task perfectly - he **transported 11 aircraft in two cars overnight** (emphasized by me. - M.S.) and subsequently evacuated them by rail to the Moscow Aviation factory..." (3*

On June 22, 1941, most of the damaged aircraft of the Soviet Air Force remained forever at the empty airfields. Yes, in some cases this was due to "force majeure circumstances" - the rapid advance of enemy tank columns to the east; in most other cases, it has become another manifestation of the large-scale phenomenon that follows

called "hidden desertion". Distinguishing and correctly interpreting these circumstances 70 years later is not easy; as a first approximation, the following scheme was chosen: the total number of "airfield losses" on the first day of the war included ALL fighters of the North-Western and Western fronts considered in the reports as "damaged on the ground", but damaged bombers were not included (their base airfields were at least at a distance of 100 - 150 km from the border, and there were no Germans there either on June 22 or 23) and damaged aircraft of the South-Western and Southern fronts.

As for the "mystery of the 9th SAD", I am forced to solve it in the most "voluntaristic" way: to classify every third aircraft destroyed on the ground by the enemy (it is in such proportions that the known losses in the 124th and 129th regiments of this division before the start of the "relocation" of personnel). With such rather shaky assumptions (in fact, reproducing the panic reports of June 41st), the following summary of irretrievable losses of aircraft at airfields for the entire day of June 22, 1941 is obtained:

Таблица 15

	Истребители и штурмовики	Бомбардировщики	Всего
ВВС СЗФ	58	16	74
ВВС ЗФ	200	137	337
ВВС ЮЗФ	126	9	135
ВВС ЮФ	5	10	15
ВСЕГО:	389	172	561

Note: The line of the Air Force of the South-Western Front does not take into account the losses of obsolete I-15bis biplanes, which were still in service with some fighter and assault regiments; these aircraft were not taken into account in all estimates of the strength of the front's aviation.

In comparison with the initial strength of the Soviet aviation grouping, "airfield losses" amount to about one-fifteenth (6.7%) of the total number of combat aircraft. IN

compared with the losses of our allies and opponents, the losses of June 22 are very high. So, for the entire campaign of May - June 1940, French aviation irretrievably lost 234 aircraft from attacks on airfields. And this despite the fact that the number of the Luftwaffe grouping that took part in the offensive on the Western Front was one and a half times greater than at the beginning of Barbarossa, and the width of the offensive front was at least (if you count in a straight line, without taking into account the

outline of the borders) in two times less. During the famous "Battle of Britain" during the first four days of the German air offensive (from August 12 to 15, 1940), the British lost only 47 fighters on the airfields. As for the 41st year and our enemy, the irretrievable losses of the Luftwaffe from attacks on airfields amounted to 13 combat aircraft in June and 19 in July. In total, on the Eastern Front in 1941, 62 aircraft were irretrievably lost at airfields (32 fighters, 19 bombers, including dive bombers Ju-87, 7 Me-110 and 4 transport Ju-52). (166) Now let's try to "tweak the sharpness"

and take a closer look at the structure and distribution of ground losses of Soviet Air Force aircraft on the first day of the war. The entire grouping of Soviet military aviation in the Western theater of operations consisted of about 140 air regiments (it is impossible to give an exact figure, because there is a problem of accounting for the so-called "forming" units), most of which did not suffer any losses on the ground on the first day of the war. The information available (and presented in detail in two volumes of this study) allows us to build the following "pyramid" of typical situations: a) traditional, "newspaper-unbridled": at dawn

on June 22, a cloud of German aircraft flies into a peacefully sleeping airfield and destroys everything (almost everything) aircraft. This was nowhere and never; b) traditional, improved: a non-stop

series of German air raids disables all (almost all) aircraft. Oddly enough, but two such episodes were in reality, and at a distance of 15 km from each other. It was according to this scheme that the planes of two (out of 140) regiments were completely lost: the 13th BAP (9th SAD) and the 16th BAP (11th SAD). True, with the important clarification that the "non-stop series" consisted of only 2 - 3 raids,

there was no resistance, the command staff (and most of the flight crew) in the 13th BAP appeared at the airfield "closer to dinner", neither the exact nor even the approximate number of aircraft actually destroyed by the enemy (and not abandoned during a stampede) is unknown; c) at first glance plausible:

the enemy delivers a sudden massive strike, as a result of which a significant part (30 - 50%) of the aircraft is destroyed. This happened, but only in the following **five regiments**:

- 74th ShAP (10th SAD), Malye Zvody airfield near the very border northwest of Brest; 15 - 20 aircraft were destroyed by the first strike, after which the personnel left the airfield, leaving all the materiel to earth;

- 33rd IAP (10th SAD), Kuplin airfield near the city of Pruzhany; the strike was not the first, but the third, and not too massive (either 9, or 18 Messerschmitts), but tactically very competent - German fighters approached the airfield at low level flight and did not allow anyone to take off, 13 were destroyed, 14 aircraft were damaged ; - 62nd ShAP

(63rd GARDEN), Lisyatychy airfield near the city of Stryi; the strike was struck early in the morning, German bombers dropped small fragmentation bombs from a very low altitude (according to the report of the division headquarters, from 50 meters), 23 aircraft were irretrievably

destroyed; - 12th IAP (64th IAD), Stanislav airfield (now Ivano Frankovsk); it was not possible to find out reliable details, the airfield was attacked by German bombers, up to 32 aircraft were lost, the fighters of the regiment resisted and shot down several enemy aircraft; - 149th IAP (64th IAD),

Chernivtsi airfield; probably one of the very first (at 4 hours 10 minutes) and the most massive raids on the first day of the war (bombers of two groups of the KG-27 squadron took part in it), about 21 - 25 "migs" were destroyed, not the slightest resistance was shown was, according to a special department, the flight crew at the airfield (30 km from the border) was absent altogether.

The listed 7 (out of 140) regiments "contributed to the common piggy bank" about 240 aircraft destroyed on the ground. Another 117 aircraft listed in Table 15 were lost under unclear circumstances in four fighter regiments of the 9th SAD. Thus, two thirds

of all the "airfield losses" that we have taken into account fall on 11 regiments - less than one tenth of their total number! But the remaining third is by no means evenly distributed: only the following 13 regiments suffered large irretrievable losses (10-15 aircraft): the IAP and 123rd IAP (ZF Air Force), 17, 46, 89, 23, 28, 164th Fighter Regiments (South-Western Front Air Force), 45th BAP (Southern Front Air Force). In total - two dozen air

regiments that suffered from a strike on airfields on June 22, tangible losses that significantly affected their combat capability. More over three dozen airfields, the Germans only "checked in", inflicting single losses on the Soviet air units based there. The Air Force of the Northern Fleet, the Air Force of the Leningrad District, the Air Force of the Red Banner Baltic Fleet, four long-range aviation corps, three air divisions of the Air Force of the Western Front, six air divisions of the Air Force of the South-Western Front, and the Air Force of the Black Sea Fleet did not lose a single aircraft on the airfields on the first day of the war.

The resolute shamelessness with which the Soviet "historians" turned the real picture of events upside down, declaring rare exceptions an inevitable and universal norm, should not surprise us - otherwise how could they "get rid" of the giant cloud of Soviet Air Force aircraft that disappeared within one or two weeks? In the first days of July, the regiments and divisions of the Air Force of the three western districts / fronts were withdrawn to the rear for reorganization; by that time, aircraft losses amounted to at least 80 - 85% of the original number, but the 15 - 20% remaining on the lists were for the most part faulty (and in the Air Force of the Southwestern Front, moreover, many air regiments were withdrawn far from the combat zone and were listed as part of the aviation of the front purely nominally). Thousands of combat aircraft were lost, and this had to be somehow explained.

The enemy refused to help in this matter - the applications of the Luftwaffe fighters and German anti-aircraft gunners were not large enough. So, according to the official report of the German High Command, on June 22, 1941, 322 Soviet aircraft were shot down in the air (including fighters claimed 265 victories, the rest of the downed aircraft were declared by anti-aircraft gunners and bomber gunners

Luftwaffe). As will be shown below, on that day the Germans limited themselves to a very modest, only one and a half, overestimation of the number of victories in the air. A real "miracle" was performed by Soviet historians - they declared 400 of their aircraft shot down in the air, i.e. more than the enemy claimed! World practice did not know this ...

Summing up the actual losses of aircraft in the air for each air regiment (and including in this list all cases of forced landings outside airfields), we come to the following summary of combat losses on June 22:

Таблица 16

	Истребители	Бомбардировщики	Всего
ВВС СЗФ	11—13	37	48—50
ВВС ЗФ + 3-й ДБАК	35—38	72—82	107—120
ВВС ЮЗФ	25—34	0	25—34
ВВС ЮФ	3	0	3
ВСЕГО:	74—88	109—119	183—207

The relatively small losses in the air of the aircraft of the Air Force of the South-Western Front, unfortunately, do not reflect the brilliant successes, but the deplorable passivity shown on the first day of the war by the largest group of Soviet aviation in terms of numbers; in particular, having five hundred serviceable bombers at its disposal, the front's aviation made only 34 sorties on June 22, and out of a thousand fighters, not one crossed the front line for an assault strike on German airfields. The enemy (the only JG-3 fighter squadron in the sky over Ukraine), having less than a hundred serviceable aircraft, declared that 25 Soviet fighters were shot down that day, with their own irretrievable losses of 3 aircraft (moreover, two of them were considered downed by anti-aircraft fire). (367) In general, on all

fronts, losses in the air amounted to a fourth of the total losses of the day on June 22. Then everything got even worse, and according to the results of the first 10 - 15 days of the war, the share of aircraft losses in the air decreased (according to the Air Force of the North-Western, Western and S

fronts) up to 8 - 15% of the total number of irretrievable losses. Where did all the rest go? In the previous

chapters, we tried very hard to find a documented answer to this question - but all efforts were in vain. Dozens, hundreds, thousands of aircraft disappear from the reports and reports silently, "in English", without saying goodbye and leaving no written evidence. As a very pathetic excuse, I can only draw the reader's attention to the fact that the General Staff of the Red Army Air Force also could not understand anything and, for lack of a better one, introduced into the official reporting the incredible, completely wild-sounding in the headquarters document, the term "unrecorded loss"[48] .

For the first 50 days of the war, by August 1, 1941, in general for the Air Force The Red Army included 5240 aircraft in the "unaccounted for loss".

During August-September 1941, the "unrecorded loss" in the report increases by 4824 aircraft. In total, by December 31, 1941,

11,005 aircraft were written off under the line "unaccounted for loss" (including 3871 fighters, 2912 bombers, 1371 attack aircraft, 2851 "others"). (372) Eleven thousand aircraft, including eight thousand

"combat" (in the meaning of this word accepted in this book), disappeared to no one knows where.

Sapienti sat. "Clever is enough," as the ancient Romans used to say.

3.2. "On measures to combat hidden desertion ..."

Returning to the starting point of this chapter, to discuss and correct those conclusions and assessments of the actions of Soviet aviation that were given in Peacefully Sleeping Airfields, special attention should be paid to paragraph 14 (by the way, it was he who caused the greatest indignation of the public). *"In those sectors of the front (Belarus, the Baltic States), where the enemy ground forces delivered the main blow, a panic "relocation" to the rear began, which in fact was a mass desertion."*

This wording needs serious editing. Firstly, the study of primary documents showed that the panic "relocation" also took place in the Southwestern Front (in Ukraine), and even in those areas where the rate of advance of the German infantry was quite low. The second and incomparably more important clarification relates to the fact that the panic "relocation" of the first days of the war was just one of many manifestations of mass HIDDEN desertion.

Of course - hidden. Such is the nature of aviation. Desertion is open - this is in the infantry, this is when a mobilized collective farm peasant, having heard the command "Forward! Attack!", runs, but not forward, but backward. Everything is clear with him (with this man), and the detachment has clear instructions on what to do in this case. And not to say that there was nothing like this in the aviation units at all - it was, but how could it be otherwise? Take, for example, the report "Losses of personnel of the ground units of the Air Force of the Western Front from 22.6 to 01.12.41." Killed - 141 people, wounded - 130, missing - 2457. And another 568 people left the ground units of the air force of the front "for other

reasons" (as in the text of the document). (373) We still have a lot of documents ahead of us, but before returning to serious arguments and facts, I suggest digressing into "alternative history" for a few minutes. It's interesting - what would happen to the army if a soldier who lost his rifle was sent? .. They weren't sent to the tribunal, but to the deepest r

reorganization" (as it often happened with pilots and entire regiments who lost their "materiel" in a couple of days). How many rifles would have been lost then? And on what meridian would the front line be in such an "alternative reality" by the autumn of 1941? Aviation (like

any other technically complex branch of the military) creates numerous opportunities for covert, almost unprovable desertion. There are many reasons and reasons for the plane not to take off: no fuel, no starter, no compressor, no tanker, no communication with the highest headquarters, bad weather, a dirt runway washed out by rain, a concrete runway littered with snow and, finally, the most a universal reason - the aircraft is temporarily out of order. The attentive reader, I hope, remembers that in the first volume of this study, we examined in detail the phenomenon of "emergency drop" - this is when, with the outbreak of hostilities, the number of serviceable aircraft sharply, abruptly decreased - even where there has not yet been a single enemy air raid on airfields. Strictly speaking, the first in a row (and the

most massive in scale) manifestation of "hidden desertion" should be recognized already by the fact that the grouping of front-line aviation (excluding the DBA and the Air Force of the fleets), which numbered more than 6.5 thousand combat aircraft by the beginning of the war, in 9 days of June, it completed only 15 thousand sorties[49] And this was in dry and hot June, with daylight hours of 16-18 hours. For comparison, we note that two months later, the Air Force of the Western Front, from which by that time there were horns and legs (77 fighters, 12 attack aircraft and 89 bombers, including 39 obsolete TB-3), from August 16 to September 26

produced 7266 sorties. (380) And there are, after all, even more outlandish forms of "hidden desertion." Take, for example, the 15th Fighter Aviation Regiment, one of the oldest and most experienced in the Red Army Air Force. On June 22, the regiment completed 202 sorties (at least, such a figure is in the report of the regiment headquarters). 202 sorties by forces of one regiment is an absolute record of the first day of the war. Yes, there was something to fly i

the sorties made are deafening. But where did they fly?

The 15th IAP is the Air Force of the North-Western Front. The same one, whose bombers attacked motorized columns of German troops from morning to evening and were mercilessly destroyed by Luftwaffe fighters. The 15th IAP did not complete a single sortie to cover the bombers (although it was this task that was assigned to the regiment by order of the front air force commander). The 15th IAP also did not make a single flight to attack the airfields clogged to the eyeballs with German aircraft in the "Suwalk ledge". Maybe he was covering his ground troops? The regiment was

based at the airfields of Kaunas and Potsunai, and 60 km (7 - 8 minutes of flight) south of Kaunas is the city of Alytus, near which a tank battle took place on the afternoon of June 22 (according to some comrades - "the first tank battle of the war"). In recent years, this story has become the subject of close attention of specialists, many details of the battle have been clarified - just no traces of the fact that Soviet fighters covered the 5th Panzer Division from the air have yet been found (but traces of the bombing strike of German aircraft on the positions of the 5th etc. were visible for many more years). The last of the realistic (we won't claim that all these "202 sorties" appeared in the report from the ceiling?) Remains the

assumption - the 15th IAP defended its own airfields all day. The thing is necessary (although fighter aviation was not invented for it), but where is the result? 202 sorties - this is a continuous patrol over the airfield of dozens of fighters, in such conditions even a bat could not have slipped to Kaunas, but already at seven o'clock in the evening the regiment was rapidly relocated to the Gruzdziiai airfield, i.e. 130 km to the rear, while leaving 42 fighters at the airfields of Kaunas and Potsunai, "destroyed at the airfield and burned during the evacuation ...". A separate, private, atypical case? Maybe. So let's move on to a larger example. The 43rd IAD, one of the best, and after the defeat of the first days of the war, is practically the only combat-ready formation

of fighter aviation in the Western

front, and the commander (Major General Zakharov, a veteran of three wars, the future Hero of the Soviet Union) is by no means the worst ... , *the 43rd air division made 4726 sorties*. Out of respect for the honored people, we do not read the number of downed enemy aircraft named in the report, we skip it and immediately proceed to information about our own losses: *"For the same period (i.e. from June 22 to August 10. - M.S.) 43- I am an air division in air battles and I lost 33 aircraft from fire FOR. (374)*

Dividing one by the other, we get a completely staggering figure of 143 sorties per plane shot down in the air! If, however, we approach the matter more carefully (i.e., recalculate the summaries of losses for the same period for the regiments of the division on the calculator), then it turns out that the losses were somewhat higher: 38 aircraft were shot down in air battles and 1 was shot down by anti-aircraft guns. (375) If we add to this list of combat losses also 36 aircraft that did not return from a combat mission (although this is already a gross fraud - far from every "not returning" was shot down in battle), then even in this case we come to an excellent indicator combat survivability: for one downed

aircraft there are 63 sorties. Wonderful? Not good. Long lists of Soviet aircraft in the daily reports of the victories of the Luftwaffe fighter squadrons and very short lists of downed German aircraft, far from compiled every day, interfere with rejoicing. (367) These documents silently but firmly testify that in the summer of the 41st, an average "donkey" or "gull" could only survive in one case - in the absence of a meeting with the enemy. It is much more difficult to understand the inevitable following question: why were there no such meetings? July - August 1941, the fierce battle of

Smolensk blazes on the ground, the water in the Dnieper at the infamous "Solovyov crossing", as the few survivors say, was red with blood ... German bombers knew where this crossing was (and dozens of other similar bridges and crossings) is located, but the Soviet fighters did not know? Or did they spend four thousand sorties covering our bombers? Does not look like it. At least 27

On July, the commander of the 3rd DBAK reports to the commander of the Air Force of the front: *"During the entire period of work of the air corps units, on your instructions, they were covered by fighters only four times, and this cover was not sufficiently*

organized ..." (377) Former Luftwaffe General W. Schwabedissen (corps commander anti-aircraft artillery at the beginning of the war) wrote a book based on the reports of the command and the memoirs of pilots, devoted to the analysis of the actions of Soviet aviation in 1941 - 1945. (381) Having cited many subjective opinions and assessments (*"when the Soviet pilots tried to attack, they opened fire from another 500 meters and tried to dive away as soon as the bomber returned fire ... several times I myself almost collided with Russian fighters flying through their system, and they did not even open fire ... until the autumn of 1941, we either did not encounter Soviet fighters, or they simply did not attack us"*), the general formulates his own conclusion:

"All reports from the commanders of the German bomber units indicate that in 1941 Soviet fighters did not pose a threat to German bombers and often avoided combat with them." Schwabedissen also quotes the report of the command of the JG-54 fighter squadron, which stated: *"Fights between fighters were rare ... Russian pilots tried to avoid the battle and leave immediately ... The very first downed planes led them to confusion ..."* And one should not think that the fighters were something something worse than others

- in bomber aviation there are even more, much more opportunities for "hidden desertion"! The actions (and even inaction) of the fighters are usually visible from the ground, while the bombers flew far beyond the horizon and disappeared in a foggy haze ... What were they doing there, beyond the horizon, who will check? "Target not detected", "target was covered by clouds", "because of deteriorating weather conditions, they returned to the airfield, bombs were dropped on a "non-explosion", "returned to the airfield due to a failure of the left (right) engine ..." What can be checked and prove? And bombing at the crossing from a height of 5 km - what's that? Combat mission or covert desertion? And how to understand the dash in the column "dive bombings completed" for all

air regiments, including those armed with diving Ar-2 and Pe-2 ... (376)
And

the list of possibilities is not over yet - there are many ways to make a sortie the last for the aircraft (but not the last for the crew). "Due to loss of orientation, he made an emergency landing on the fuselage", "sat down on an emergency landing after running out of all fuel", "the plane was hit, made an emergency landing in the area ..." Even in an offensive, when the front line goes forward, not back, an emergency landing on the fuselage is likely to lead to the irretrievable loss of the aircraft; and already in the summer of 41, when the front was rolling east, one could immediately forget about the plane that landed "on its belly". And they forgot, and wrote off as a combat loss (which was mentioned dozens of times above).

The noble fury that boils up in the reader of these lines is understandable to me - after all, I myself was born in the USSR. I also "know" that the falcons, as one person, were rushing into battle ... Therefore, I conclude my vile hints on this ellipsis and proceed to quoting (with minimal comments) original documents. It turns out that what the "patriots of the Stalinist empire" do not want to see today, Comrade Stalin himself and his generals saw back in 1941:

"Order for the Air Force of the Western Direction No. 04, July 20, 1941, Vyazma.

Contents: "On the evacuation of aircraft."

During the past period of hostilities, there have been many cases of criminal attitude to faulty materiel.

1. Aircraft remained unevacuated at the Bobruisk airfield. 2. An inspection

after the evacuation from the Orsha and Mogilev airfields revealed the property of the workshops and the aircraft repair fund left in place. In both cases, further evacuation was carried out without any difficulty.

3. The Pe-2 plane remained at the Smolensk airfield only because of the lack of wheels. The command of the 16th BAP, despite a two-time request to send wheels from the regiment's faulty aircraft, [wheels] did not sent.

At the Shatalovsky airfield, 6 Su-2 aircraft were destroyed, which were ordered to overtake the commander of 13 dietary supplements, but no timely measures were taken for distillation.

4. Aircraft were found at many airfields, abandoned by no one knows who, quite serviceable. After the relocation, 3

AKs were left: At the airfield in Smolensk, 6 SBs are fully operational and 7 SBs faulty, all transferred to 313 RAP.

At the Shatalovo airfield, no one knows who left faulty 3 Sat and 3 MIG.

MiG-3, DB-3 were left at the Borovskoye airfield. On 8.7.41, 2 I-153s arrived at the Prontsevo airfield, the pilots left for no one knows where. The last case - an

airplane was abandoned at the Vyazma airfield of the Civil Air Fleet I-16, tail number 17 is white, and UTI-4 are quite serviceable.

5. 140 BAP left four aircraft before leaving for the front from their permanent base at the Sescha airfield, easily restored by field repairs.

These ugly facts are criminal and nothing else as a betrayal of the motherland, cannot be evaluated. I ORDER:

1) For failure to take measures to deliver the wheels to the Pe-2 aircraft 16 BAP Commander of the 16th BAP, Captain Pavlov, I announce a severe reprimand.

2) The case against the commander of the 13th BAD, Major General Polynin, who did not comply with the order in a timely manner, should be transferred to the military prosecutor. 3) I will issue a severe reprimand to the commander of the 140th BAP, Colonel Obraztsov, for leaving the aircraft in the Seshch area, which required field repairs. Aircraft by 25.7.41 to restore and

be included in the regiment.

4. Investigate the case of leaving I-16 No. 17 aircraft at the Vyazma airfield. and UTI-4, find the culprits and bring them to trial by a military tribunal. Investigation to be carried out by engineer 3rd rank Sviridov. In the future, establish order at the airfields, excluding

the arrival and leaving unknown aircraft. Each arriving aircraft must be registered. For the discovery of unknown aircraft, I will put the head of the air garrison on trial by the Revolutionary Tribunal ...

Commander of the Air Force of the Western Direction, Colonel Naumenko. (378)

An attentive reader, of course, noticed and appreciated both the names of the commanders and - most importantly - the scale of the "ugly facts". Thunder and lightning fly from the pages of the order in connection with the loss of two "donkeys" (one training), a pair of wheels for one "pawn" and other outrages, completely microscopic on the scale of the events of June 22-23. But the calendar is no longer June, but July, and the new (third in a row in one month) commander of the ZF Air Force no longer intends to recognize criminal sloppiness as "force majeure circumstances." And, as always happens in the conditions of a military bureaucratic system, the best fall into "distribution" - the worst have long since moved to Kalinin and Gorky for "retraining and reformation". And the future marshal, commander of the 3rd DBAK, Colonel Skripko, almost "thundered under the tribunal", and he had to write an explanatory note (*"the 3 AK never had a single SB aircraft, as well as the MiG-3 ... the crews of the Su aircraft -2 left arbitrarily, I reported to you about this disgrace in a timely manner ..."*). (379)

"Order for the Air Force of the Western direction dated July 28, 1941, No. 001 (?)

"On the simultaneous census of aircraft of all types in parts of the Air Force of the Western direction." In pursuance

of the order of the Supreme Command and the cipher telegram of the head of the General Staff dated 26.7.41

1) On July 31, 1941, at 3:00 a.m., conduct a simultaneous census of all combat, transport, communication, training and medical aircraft in all parts of the Western direction.

2) In the census, take into account all aircraft located on the territory of the units, including aircraft that are on forced landings, under repair and aircraft workshops.

*Commander of the Air Force of the Western Direction,
Colonel Naumenko. (382)*

"Order on the Air Force of the Red Army No. 0067, August 15, 1941, Moscow

The census of the aircraft of the Red Army Air Force on 1.8.41 revealed a number of egregious outrages, both in the accounting of aircraft and in the provision of reports on combat strength. So, for example,

on the Northern Front, information was provided only on combat aircraft with an underestimation compared to the census by 132 serviceable and 96 defective aircraft, on the North-Western Front with an understatement of 49 serviceable

and 66 defective ones, of which 75 aircraft of different parts, not included in the Air Force of the front, on the Western Front - by 86 serviceable and 82 defective, of which 15

aircraft of unknown affiliation, on the South-Western Front with an underestimation of 85 serviceable and 11 defective

aircraft (total recruited "forgotten and lost" 352 serviceable and 255 defective aircraft, which at that time approximately corresponded to the strength of the Air Force of the entire front. - M.S.).

There are cases when units and individual crews leave serviceable and faulty aircraft without transferring them to other units remaining at the front, as a result of which these aircraft turn out to be homeless ... Commander of the Red Army Air Force, Lieutenant General Zhigarev. (383)

"Order of the Commander of the Air Force of the Western Front (n/n, no later than August 10),

Vyazma. Contents: "About the high accident rate in parts of the Zapfront Air Force." ...

A large number of materiel is put out of action by personnel. Indiscipline, poor organization of flight work and gross violations of elementary rules and Flight Operations Manual are the main causes of accidents. The 314th reconnaissance aviation regiment stands out in this regard, where the poor state of military discipline, panic and poor organization of combat work led to the mass destruction of expensive materiel ...

Bring the order to the entire flight crew on receipt. Commander of the Air Force of the Western Front, Colonel Naumenko. (384)

"Order of the NPO USSR N9 0299, August 19, 1941, Moscow.

"On the procedure for awarding flight personnel and on measures to combat hidden desertion among individual pilots." The

famous order of Stalin, in which a detailed price list of monetary rewards (as well as the procedure for awarding orders) for pilots, navigators, shooters and commanders was painted on several pages; separately - for long-range bomber aviation, separately - for short-range bombers, for attack aircraft, reconnaissance aircraft and fighters ... The very idea of compiling a "price list" quite clearly characterizes the Boss's way of thinking, but in this case we are interested in the fourth paragraph of the order: "4 . *Measures to combat hidden desertion among individual pilots. The commanders and commissars of air divisions should*

carefully investigate all cases of forced landings with retracted landing gear and

other flight accidents that disable aircraft materiel. The culprits who landed with retracted landing gear or committed other actions that disable the materiel without good reason should be investigated as deserters and brought to trial by a military tribunal.

The order is to be put into effect from August 20 of this year, transmitted to the Air Force units by telegraph and read to all personnel.

People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR I. Stalin. (385)

On August 29, 1941, a group of Luftwaffe aircraft raided the Glebovshchina airfield (in the North-Western Front, near the city of Demyansk), as a result of which 2 fighters were destroyed on the ground and 4 more were damaged. By the standards and scales of June 22, such an event does not even deserve to be mentioned - but by the end of the summer of the 41st performance, the "measures" and assessments began to change radically; a firm understanding came that the airfield is not a very, very large playground, but the location of a military unit, and the military unit must respond to fire with fire:

*"Order to the Air Force of the North-Western Front No. 016,
September 1, 1941,*

*on August 29, 1941, two groups of enemy Me-110 aircraft made a daytime raid on the Glebovshchina and Bely Bor airfields, as a result, two LaGG-3 and four LaGG-3 aircraft damaged; two MiG-3 aircraft were burned at the Bely Bor airfield. During these raids, the enemy lost only four aircraft ("only four", more were needed! - M.S.). This **unpunished** (emphasized by me. - M.S.) raid and our losses occurred only as a result of the lack of proper order at the airfields, which the Military Council of the front requires to establish. VNOS service and direct observation at aerodromes are not organized. There*

was no timely warning of the raid. There was no fire defense at the airfields. Definitely assigned teams of shooters with rifles and light machine guns were not allocated, organized fire was not conducted on enemy aircraft flying at low altitude. The fighters ready for takeoff took off slowly (the fact that they should be, is not even discussed. - M.S.) and disorganized. The pilot of the 21st IAP, Lieutenant S., being on the plane at the start and, despite the fact that a "red rocket" was given, having full take-off capability, did not take off, was attacked by an enemy plane, killed himself and the plane was destroyed. The planes that took off from the ground were not controlled by radio, they were not concentrated in the necessary areas and acted only "in a sighted manner" and each independently, which is why they did not conduct an organized battle ... I order: airfields of their units and their combat readiness and ability to repel possible enemy air raids and

eliminate all identified shortcomings on the spot by 3.9.41 . years after the loss of four aircraft is hardly appropriate. - M.S.). Commander of the NWF Armed Forces, Aviation Major General Kutsevalov. (386)

It cannot be said that by September 3, "disorder and disorganization" were completely eliminated on the entire front from the Barents to the Black Sea, but the numbers of "aerodrome losses" of Soviet Air Force aircraft began to dizzily decrease. Aviation of the Western Front lost (at least, as stated in the annual report) on the ground 750 aircraft in June-July, 1 (one) aircraft in August, 1 in September, 1 in October, 3 in November and not a single one in frosty December 1941. (387) It is unlikely that these figures are absolutely accurate, but the general trend is beyond doubt - the magic wand (or the universal "excuse" - as you like) called "strike on airfields" has broken. Moreover, it broke down forever - no matter what new defeats awaited the Red Army next year, the loss of Soviet Air Force aircraft from enemy attacks on airfields for the entire 1942 year, for all its 12 months, amounted to only 204 units. (25)

One way of "hidden desertion" has become less. With others, a fierce, long-term struggle was still ahead:

"To the Commander of the Air Forces of the Fronts, Separate Armies and Strike Groups, Ref. No.

332234, June 9, 1942 ... The main shortcomings in the actions of our fighter aviation are as follows:

a) The actions of fighters are not aimed at destroying the enemy, but very often come down to simple defense. This, as a rule, transfers the initiative of action to the enemy and undermines the offensive spirit of our pilots. b) The activity of fighter aviation

is not organized: fighter regiments operate in complete isolation from one another. There is no ground control of fighters in the air, and encounters with the enemy are therefore random. c) The forces of fighters are not saved: fighters very often fly without any need for this (exactly three months later,

Comrade Stalin will give a different, more adequate assessment of these "unnecessary flights." - M.S.), since they have not yet been mastered the idea that any sortie of fighters, as a result of which there was no meeting

and the destruction of the enemy, is a waste of manpower and resources ...
f) *The*

personal example of commanders is still not the main method of increasing the combat capability of a unit, only because some regiment commanders fly little, do not participate in battles and therefore are not sufficiently authoritative leaders ...

Commander of the Red Army Air Force, Lieutenant General of Aviation Novikov. (388)

“Directive of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command No. 170549, August 4, 1942 by the Commander of the Western and

Kalinin Fronts, the Red Army Air Force. Copies: commanders of the troops of the fronts, the 7th Separate and Air armies,

representatives of the Headquarters. According to the report of Comrade Novikov, commander of the Red Army Air Force, out of 400 fighters assigned to participate in the operations of the Kalinin and Western fronts, up to 140 aircraft failed in four to five days of the operation.

According to the same report, with the complete absence of enemy aircraft on the first day of the battle and with a triple superiority over the enemy in the following days, our combat losses amounted to 51 fighters, 89 fighters are considered out of action due to technical malfunctions.

Considering such

an unacceptably high percentage of aircraft that failed within 4-5 days for technical reasons as incredible, the Stavka sees here the presence of obvious sabotage, selfishness on the part of some part of the flight crew, which, looking for individual minor problems in the aircraft, seeks to evade combat. The ugly technical supervision and control over the materiel, as well as over the performance of combat missions by pilots, not only allows, but also contributes to these criminal, intolerable phenomena in the army. The Headquarters of the Supreme High Command orders: 1. *Immediately, through responsible and experienced persons, check each individually failed aircraft, find out the true causes of malfunctions and direct culprits*

their.

2. The flight personnel caught in sabotage should be immediately withdrawn from units, reduced to penal air squadrons and, under the personal supervision of air division commanders, used to perform the most important tasks in the most dangerous directions and thereby provide them with the opportunity to atone for their guilt.

3. Hopeless, malicious self-seekers should be immediately withdrawn from air units, deprived of their rank, and sent as ordinary soldiers to penal infantry companies to perform the most difficult tasks in ground units. 4. On receipt, the results of

the check and the measures taken to implement this order, with a list of flight personnel sent to penal squadrons and infantry companies, report. Headquarters of the Supreme High Command.

I. Stalin. A. Vasilevsky. (389)

"Order of the NPO of the USSR No. 0685, September 9, 1942, Moscow. "On the Establishment of the Concept of Combat Departure for Fighters". Facts on the Kalinin, Western, Stalingrad, Southeastern and other fronts have established that our fighter aviation, as a rule, operates very poorly and very often does not fulfill its combat missions. Our fighters not only do not engage in combat with enemy fighters, but avoid attacking bombers. When carrying out the task of covering attack aircraft and bombers, our fighters, even with a quantitative superiority over enemy fighters, evade combat, walk to the side and allow our attack aircraft and bombers to be shot down with impunity.

By order of the People's Commissar of Defense No. 0299, monetary rewards and government awards for combat sorties with the performance of a combat mission are provided for flight personnel as an incentive. This order in aviation units is perverted at the fronts. Any flight on the battlefield

is incorrectly considered a sortie, regardless of whether or not the fighters have completed the combat mission assigned to them. Such an incorrect concept of a sortie does not educate our fighters in the spirit of an active attack on

enemy planes and enables individual dodgers and cowards to receive monetary rewards and government awards on a par with honest and brave pilots. In order to eliminate such

injustice and in order to encourage only honest pilots, and to identify dodgers and cowards, expel them from the ranks of our fighters and punish them, I order: the enemy and
conducted

an air battle with him, and when performing the task of covering attack aircraft and bombers, consider only such a sortie as a combat exhortation for fighters, in which attack aircraft and bombers, when performing a combat mission, did not have losses from attacks by enemy fighters. 2. To count as downed aircraft for pilots only those enemy aircraft that are confirmed by photographs or ground surveillance reports.

3. From now on, payment for sorties and submissions to the government award should be made strictly guided by paragraphs 1 and 2 of this order. 4. Fighter pilots who evade

combat with an air enemy should be brought to justice and transferred to penal units - to the infantry. 5. Order to announce to all fighters

on receipt. People's Commissar of Defense I. Stalin.
(390)

Whole in- wars it took the Supreme Commander-Chief a year to see and evaluate "an incredibly high percentage of aircraft that failed for technical reasons", and many other details of the behavior of the "falcons named after him". It took more than half a century for these (and many similar) documents to be visible to us. And on the last page of the last chapter we will read

another (of many similar) documents - we must answer the question that all readers ask with bewilderment or indignation.

"Order for the NWF Air Force No. 15, August 10, 1941, Demyansk.

7.8.41. at 14 o'clock. 15 minutes. eight enemy Ju-88 aircraft and three Ju-87 aircraft attacked with the aim of bombing a crossing over the river. Fishing near the village of Korovitino.

To repel the attack, two I-16 aircraft flew to the place where the air enemy appeared, piloted by pilots of the 6th IAP - Lieutenant Novikov and Jr. lieutenant Glukhov, who entered into battle with an enemy many times superior and, with their courage and courageous actions, upset the [battle] order and already drove the enemy away, as at that moment 8 Me-109 attacked a brave couple of pilots.

Our pilots did not flinch, did not leave the battlefield and did not evade it, but boldly rushed against the enemy 10 times superior. At the time of the fierce battle to help t.t. Two more I-16s flew to Novikov and Glukhov - lieutenants t.t. Gruzov and Gurin. A heated battle ensued between the valiant four and 19 enemy aircraft, as a result of which our glorious Stalinist Falcons not only drove the enemy away, but also came out victorious, shooting down 2 Me 109 and 2 Ju-88 aircraft.

For courageous actions and the valor shown at the same time in defeating the fascist vultures, I enter with a petition to the Military Council of the NWF to present lieutenants Novikov, Gurin, Gruzdev and ml. Lieutenant Glukhov. An order to announce to the entire flight and technical staff of the Air Force

of the front. Commander of the NWF Air Force, Major General of Aviation

Kutsevalov. (391)

APPS

Annex 1

Organizational structure of military aviation, terms and definitions

On the eve of the start of the war in the Soviet Union, there were several different (in structure and order of subordination) "aviation", namely: front-line (or military), subordinate to the command of combined arms armies and districts (fronts), aviation of the Navy, long-range aviation (long-range aviation actions, long-range bomber aviation), subordinate directly to the High Command of the Red Army, air defense fighter aircraft. In this book, all these structures are

presented under the general name "Soviet Aviation", "Soviet Air Force", "Red Army Air Force". In Nazi Germany, the entire military aviation

(Luftwaffe) was a strictly centralized structure; all aviation units and formations (including those responsible for the country's air defense missions or interacting with the Navy), as well as anti-aircraft artillery, searchlight and radar units, were united under common command. The minimum "cell" of military aviation (both in the Soviet Air Force and in the Luftwaffe) was a "link". A flight

usually had 3 or 4 aircraft. Several links (from 3 to 5) were combined into a squadron, which included 12 (in the Luftwaffe) or from 12 to

15 (as in the Soviet Air Force) aircraft. The main tactical unit of combat aviation was the military unit, called "regiment" (in the Soviet Air Force) or "group" (in

the Luftwaffe). As part of the Luftwaffe group, according to the staffing table, there should have been three squadrons and a headquarters link, a total of 40 aircraft; such a structure existed in all branches of aviation in Germany. In the Soviet Air Force, fighter, assault and various bomber regiments had a different structure, but they all

the staffing table should have had 62 - 64 aircraft (four or five squadrons and a regimental control link).

Several regiments (groups) were united into a formation, which was called an "aviation division" (in the Soviet Air Force) or a "squadron" (in the Luftwaffe). On the eve of the war, the Soviet Air Force included "fighter" (IAD), "bomber" (BAD) and "mixed" (SAD) air divisions. Each division had its own number (for example, the 9th SAD, the 13th BAD, the 43rd IAD). The regiments that were part of the division (as a rule, from 3 to 5) had their own numbering, not associated with the division number (for example, the 127th IAP, the 16th BAP, the 61st ShAP). In the documents of the 41st year, bomber regiments were often designated with an indication of their purpose, for example, SBP (high-speed bomber), BBP (close-range bomber), but in this book a single designation system is used for front-line aviation regiments (only the abbreviation BAP); long-range aviation regiments are designated as DBAP or TBAP (respectively, "long-range" or "heavy" bomber regiment). In the Luftwaffe,

squadrons were also divided into fighter (JG), bomber (KG), dive bomber squadrons (StG), squadrons of heavy long-range fighters (ZG). The squadron (with rare exceptions) had three groups, and the groups were designated by the squadron number, for example II / JG-53 (the second group of the 53rd fighter squadron).

Several squadrons of the Luftwaffe (usually 4 to 6) were reduced to a large structure called an "air corps". The air corps were united into the Air Fleets. In total, three Luftwaffe Air Fleets operated on the Eastern Front (1st V.f., 2nd V.f., 4th V.f.) consisting of five (1, 8, 2, 4, 5th) aviation corps (as well as some units and divisions of the 5th Air Force in the Arctic).

In the Soviet Air Force, the corps link existed only in long-range bomber aviation. By the beginning of the war, four such corps were deployed in the Western theater of operations: the 1st DBAC in the Novgorod region, the 3rd DBAC in the Smolensk region, the 2nd DBAC in the Kursk region, and the 4th DBAC in the Zaporozhye region. Each corps had two bomber divisions (another, separate 18th DBAD, was based in the Kyiv region). Scheduled incorporation

The DBAK of the fighter division, equipped with long-range escort fighters, was practically not implemented. A few

days before the start of the war, it was decided to deploy three air defense fighter aviation corps (6th in Moscow, 7th in Leningrad, 8th in Baku), and these corps did not have a divisional link (i.e. fighter the regiments were directly subordinate to the command of the corps and the air defense zone). The formation of the IAK air defense was already carried out during the war that began on June 22, 1941.

Appendix No. 2

The composition of the grouping and the number of combat aircraft of Soviet aviation as of June 22, 1941

Air Force of the Leningrad Military District (Northern Front) and the Air Force of the Northern Fleet

	Истребители	Бомбардировщики
1 САД, Мурманск	145 ИАП, 147 ИАП 109 / 0	10 БАП, 137 БАП 85 / 0
ВВС С. флота, 72 САП	21 / 0	11 / 0
55 САД, Петрозаводск	153 ИАП 111 / 45	72 БАП 49 / 4
5 ИАД, Выборг	7 ИАП, 158 ИАП, 159 ИАП 269 / 138	—
3 ИАД, Горелово	19 ИАП, 44 ИАП 137 / 2	—

	Истребители	Бомбардировщики
39 ИАД, Пушкин	154 ИАП, 155 ИАП, 156 ИАП 111 / 0	—
54 ИАД, Левашово	26 ИАП, 157 ИАП 90 / 0	—
41 БАД, Гатчина	—	201 БАП, 202 БАП, 205 БАП 48
2 САД, Старая Русса	—	2 БАП, 44 БАП, 58 БАП 174/17
ВСЕГО:	848 / 185	367 / 21

Air Force of the Red Banner Baltic Fleet

	Истребители	Бомбардировщики
61 ИАБр	5 ИАП, 13 ИАП	—
8 БАБр	—	1 МТАП, 57 БАП
10 САБр	71 ИАП	73 БАП
отд. эскадрильи	15, 41, 43, 44, 58, 71 и 81-я	
ВСЕГО:	325 / 46	174 / 0

Air Force of the Baltic OVO (North-Western Front)

	Истребители	Бомбардировщики
4 САД, Таллин	38 ИАП 61 / 0	35 БАП, 50 БАП, 63 БАП 134 / 5
6 САД, Рига	21 ИАП, 148 ИАП 132 / 0	31 БАП, 40 БАП 110 / 0
7 САД, Митава	10 ИАП, 238 ИАП 85 / 23	9 БАП, 46 БАП 111 / 0
8 САД, Каунас	15 ИАП, 31 ИАП, 61 ШАП 203 / 116	—
57 САД, Вильнюс	42 ИАП, 49 ИАП 142 / 0	54 БАП 55 / 7
ВСЕГО:	623 / 139	405 / 12

Air Force of the Western OVO (Western Front)

	Истребители	Бомбардировщики
11 САД, Лида	122 ИАП, 127 ИАП 139 / 0	16 БАП 60 / 37
9 САД, Белосток	41 ИАП, 124 ИАП, 126 ИАП, 129 ИАП 360 / 237	13 БАП 59 / 8

	Истребители	Бомбардировщики
10 САД, Коб-рин	33 ИАП, 123 ИАП, 74 ШАП 139 / 0	39 БАП 48 / 9
12 БАД, Ви-тебск	—	6 БАП, 43 БАП, 128 БАП 84 / 0
43 ИАП, Балбасово	160 ИАП, 161 ИАП, 162 ИАП, 163 ИАП 243 / 0	—
13 БАД	—	24 БАП, 97 БАП, 121 БАП, 125 БАП, 130 БАП 208 / 0
ВСЕГО:	881 / 237	459 / 54

Air Force of the Kyiv OVO (South-Western Front)

	Истребители	Бомбардировщики
14 ИАД, Луцк	17 ИАП, 46 ИАП, 89 ИАП 171 / 0	—
15 САД, Львов	23 ИАП, 28 ИАП, 164 ИАП 170 / 98	—
63 САД, Самбор	20 ИАП, 91 ИАП, 165 ИАП 178 / 63	—
64 ИАД, Станислав	12 ИАП, 149 ИАП, 166 ИАП, 247 ИАП 275 / 57	—
16 САД, Тарнополь	87 ИАП, 92 ИАП 132 / 4	86 БАП 46 / 9
62 БАД, Овруч	—	52 БАП, 94 БАП, 226 БАП, 227 БАП 213 / 15
17 САД, Проскуров	—	48 БАП, 224 БАП, 225 БАП 66 / 34
19 БАД, Белая Церковь	—	33 БАП, 136 БАП, 138 БАП 142 / 10
44 ИАД, Умань	88 ИАП, 248 ИАП, 249 ИАП 136 / 0	—
36 ИАД, Киев	2 ИАП, 43 ИАП 112 / 0	—
18 ДБАД, Киев	—	90 ДБАП, 93 ДБАП, 14 ТБАП 166 / 9
ВСЕГО:	1174 / 222	633 / 77

Air Force of the Odessa Military District (Southern Front)

	Истребители	Бомбардировщики
20 САД, Кишинев	4 ИАП, 55 ИАП 208 / 115	45 БАП, 211 БАП 67 / 5
21 САД, Одесса	67 ИАП, 69 ИАП, 146 ИАП, 168 ИАП 277 / 62	5 БАП 60 / 25
45 САД, Кировоград	131 ИАП 72 / 5	132 БАП, 232 БАП 80 / 5
		отд. 317 РАП 40 / 0
ВСЕГО:	557 / 182	247 / 35

Air Force of the Black Sea Fleet

	Истребители	Бомбардировщики
62 ИАБр	8 ИАП, 9 ИАП, 32 ИАП 227 / 19	—
63 БАБр	—	2 МТАП, 40 БАП 108 / 15
отд. эскадрильи	87, 94, 96-я оиав 85 / 0	70-я, 78-я обав 25 / 0
ВСЕГО:	312 / 19	133 / 15

Long-range bomber aviation formations at the Western Theater of Operations

1-й АК, Новгo-род	40 АД (53 ДБАП, 200 ДБАП, 7 ТБАП)	94 ДБ-3/ДБ-3ф, 68 ТБ-3
	51 АД (7 ДБАП, 203 ДБАП, 204 ДБАП)	112 ДБ-3/ДБ-3ф
3-й АК, Смо-ленск	52 АД (98 ДБАП, 212 ДБАП, 3 ТБАП)	132 ДБ-3/ДБ-3ф, 52 ТБ-3
	42 АД (96 ДБАП, 207 ДБАП, 1 ТБАП)	69 ДБ-3/ДБ-3ф, 41 ТБ-3
2-й АК, Курск	35 АД (100 ДБАП, 219 ДБАП, 223 ДБАП)	125 ДБ-3/ДБ-3ф
	48 АД (51 ДБАП, 220 ДБАП, 221 ДБАП)	127 ДБ-3/ДБ-3ф
4-й АК, Запо-рожье	22 АД (8 ДБАП, 11 ДБАП, 21 ДБАП)	196 ДБ-3/ДБ-3ф
	50 АД (81 ДБАП, 231 ДБАП, 299 ДБАП)	149 ДБ-3/ДБ-3ф
ВСЕГО:		1004 ДБ-3/ДБ-3ф, 161 ТБ-3

TOTAL:

- 4720 fighters, incl. 1030 MiG-3 and Yak-1; -
3583 bombers, incl. 205 Pe-2 and 9 TB-7; - a total
of 8303 combat aircraft.

*Note: - the
total number of aircraft is indicated, including temporarily
faulty;*

- combat-ready aircraft accounted for an average of 80-85% of the total;
- a fraction indicates the number of "new types" of aircraft included in the total number (MiG-3 and Yak-1 fighters, Pe-2 and TB-7 bombers);
- about 25 emerging air regiments and aircraft were not taken into account, were in their arsenal;
- reconnaissance missions are not included in the aviation of the Navy units and the seaplanes they were armed with;
- the composition of the Air Force of the Southwestern Front is indicated according to the report of the commander of the Air Force of the front, other sources give a larger number of aircraft.

Annex 3 The composition of the grouping and the number of combat aircraft of the Luftwaffe on the Eastern Front on June 22, 1941

Part of the forces of the 5th Air Fleet, Arctic

Истребители	Бомбардировщики	Пикировщики Ju-87	Me-110
1./JG 77 12 Bf-109	5./KG 30 12 Ju-88	IV(St)/LG 1 36 Ju-87	ZG 76 6 Me-110

1st Air Fleet (1st Air Corps), East Prussia

Истребители	Бомбардировщики
I, II, III/JG 54 129 Bf-109 F	I, II, III/KG 76 90 Ju-88
4., 5./JG 53 35 Bf-109 F	I, II, III/KG 77 91 Ju-88
Всего: 164 / 131	II, III/KG 1 59 Ju-88
	Kgr 806 30 Ju-88
	Всего: 270 / 210

2nd Air Fleet (8th and 2nd Air Corps), Poland

Истребители	Бомбардировщики
I, III/JG 53 79 Bf-109 F	I, 8., 9./KG 2 82 Do-17
II/JG 52 39 Bf-109 F	III/KG 3 44 Do-17
II, III/JG 27 84 Bf-109 E	I, II/KG 3 83 Ju-88
II (Sch)/LG 2 38 Bf-109 E	I, II, III/KG 53 86 He-111
I, II, III, IV/JG 51 160 Bf-109 F	Всего: 295 / 203
Всего: 400 / 346	

Пикировщики Ju-87	Многоцелевые Me -110
II, III/StG 1 81 Ju-87	I, II/ZG 26 78 Me-110
I, III/StG 2 77 Ju-87	II, III/SKG 210 83 Me-110
I, II, III/StG 77 115 Ju-87	штабы эскадр 16 Me-110
Всего: 273 / 184	Всего: 177 / 137

4th Air Fleet, 5th Air Corps, Southern Poland

Истребители	Бомбардировщики
I, II, III/JG 3 109 Bf-109 F	I, II, III/KG 51 92 Ju-88
Всего: 109 / 89	I, II/KG 54 71 Ju-88
	I, II, III/KG 55 84 He-111
	Всего: 247 / 226

4th Air Fleet, 4th Air Corps, Romania

Истребители	Бомбардировщики
II, III/JG 77 76 Bf-109 E, F	I, II, III/KG 27 87 He-111
I (J)/LG 2 40 Bf-109 E	II/KG 4 24 He-111
Stab, III/JG 52 47 Bf-109 F	Всего: 111 / 81
Всего: 163 / 105	

TOTAL: 2275 / 1779

Fighters - 848 / 683 (633 Bf-109 F + 215 Bf-109 E).

Bombers - 935/732 (528Ju-88 + 281He-111 + 126Do-17). Dive bombers (Ju-87) - 309 / 220.

Multi-purpose (Me-110) - 183 / 144.

Notes: - in

the first digit - total aircraft, the second - including combat-ready ones; all aircraft of the 5th Air Fleet are listed as combat-ready; - in the aircraft

of the headquarters level are taken into account in the total number of the corresponding

squadrons; - in cases where the fighter group was equipped with Bf-109 aircraft of two modifications (E and F), all fighters were counted as Bf-109 F; this led to some overestimation of the total number of Bf-109 F compared to other sources;

- as part of the headquarters units of the bomber squadrons was also several Me-110s (they are not included in this table).

**Annex 4 June
22, 1941 Claimed victories by fighters
of the 1st and 2nd Air Force. The Luftwaffe and
the real losses of the NWF and WF Air Force**

	Всего	В т.ч. истр.
I/JG-54	12	1
II/JG-54	15	1
III/JG-54	6	2
Stab JG-54	1	0
II/JG-53	11	0
Всего по 1-му В.ф.	45	4
III/JG-53	36	20
II/JG-27	10	7
III/JG-27	2	0
Stab JG-27	1	1
I/JG-51	18	2
II/JG-51	28	5
III/JG-51	19	1

	Всего	В т.ч. истр.
IV/JG-51	23	9
Stab JG-51	5	1
I/JG-53	18	2
Stab JG-53	6	3
Всего по 2-му В.ф.	166	51
Всего в полосе СЗФ и ЗФ	211	55
ВВС СЗФ	48—50	11—13
ВВС ЗФ + 3 ДБАК	107—120	35—38
ВСЕГО:	155-170	46—51

Notes: -

Group III/JG-53 operated at the junction of the NWF and WF, it can be assumed that about half of all declared victories relate to air battles with units of the NWF Air Force; - among the declared downed fighters there are only 14 "MiGs", in including at least 6 shot down in the NWF zone.

Annex 5

Irretrievable combat losses of Luftwaffe aircraft

1st Air Fleet

	Истре- бители	Бомбар- диров.	Ju-87	Me-110	Всего	В т.ч. на земле
Исход- ная чис- лен- ность	164	270	0	0	434	
Потери 22 июня	1	2	—	—	3	0
Потери с 23 по 30 июня	4	34	—	—	38	0
ВСЕГО:	5	36	—	—	41	0

2nd Air Fleet

	Истре- бители	Бомбар- диров.	Лу-87	Ме-110	Всего	в т.ч. на земле
Исход- ная числен- ность	400	295	273	177	1145	
Потери 22 июня	15	3	2	5	25	?
Потери с 23 по 30 июня	19	10	17	16	62	6
ВСЕГО:	34	13	19	21	87	6

4th Air Fleet, 5th Air Corps

	Истре- бители	Бомбар- диров.	Лу-87	Ме-110	Всего	в т.ч. на земле
Исход- ная числен- ность	109	247	0	?	356	
Потери 22 июня	3	28	—	1	32	0
Потери с 23 по 30 июня	14	31		0	45	0
ВСЕГО:	17	59	—	1	77	0

4th Air Fleet, 4th Air Corps

	Истре- бители	Бомбар- диров.	Ju-87	Me-110	Всего	В т.ч. на земле
Исход- ная чис- лен- ность	163	111	—	—	274	
Потери 22 июня	1	0	—	—	1	0
Потери с 23 по 30 июня	5	7			12	
ВСЕГО:	6	7	—		13	0

Cumulative losses for all Air Forces

	Истре- бители	Бомбар- диров.	Ju-87	Me-110	Всего	Из них на зем- ле
Исход- ная числен- ность	848	935	309	183	2275	
Потери 22 июня	20	33	2	6	61	?
Потери с 22 по 30 июня	62	115	19	22	218	6
Потери с 1 по 31 июля	122	149	50	39	370	13
ИТОГО :	184	264	69	61	578	19
% от исходн. числен.	22	28	22	33	25	0,8

Notes:

- the initial number is indicated taking into account the defective aircraft; -

the tables take into account the irretrievable (60% damage) losses of combat aircraft "from enemy impact and for unknown reasons";

– cumulative losses for July are indicated taking into account the losses of the 5th V.f.

in the Arctic; - according to other sources, in June 1941, irretrievably lost on airfields 13 German aircraft.

The classification of losses adopted by the

Luftwaffe: up to 24% - small and medium damage that can be eliminated by ground services;

25 - 39% - major repairs are required in parts; 40 - 44% - replacement of individual units or systems is required; 45 - 59% - numerous damages requiring the replacement of many aircraft units; 60 - 80% -

not recoverable, some units can be used as spare parts;

81 - 99% - completely destroyed, debris fell on German-controlled territory;

100% went missing, fell on enemy territory or at sea.

Appendix 6

Pilots and commanders of the Soviet Air Force about their aircraft and enemy tactics

From the Report on the combat work of the units of the 6th SAD from 22.6 to 20.9.41

“Very often, even a superior group of enemy fighters evades combat with our fighters, and if it enters into battle, it does not conduct it for a long time and stubbornly. Especially at one time, the Me-109, and also the Me-110 evaded the battle with the I-153 of the 38th IAP ...

The equipment in service with the enemy Air Force (Me-109, Me-110, Xe-113) is good in terms of its performance characteristics, but due to the insufficient training of the enemy flight personnel and their apparently weak moral stamina, all the capabilities of the equipment are not used, as a result of which the enemy suffers heavy losses even in battles, when they significantly outnumber our fighters.

Enemy bombers act intrusively only when they are covered by fighters and do not see an organized rebuff from the ground or in the air; when resisted, they leave very quickly. Cowardice and unwillingness to engage in battle with our fighters is the main characteristic of the training of the enemy air force flight personnel ... ”(TsAMO, f. 221, on. 1374, d. 16, m. 57-67)

From the Report on the combat work of the 57th SAD from 22.6 to 23.9.41

Not a single case has been recorded of a pair of German fighters engaging in combat with a group of our fighters; in most cases, using speed, they leave the battle ...

Of the 125 air battles, 18 were very fleeting, because. the enemy, having in some cases superiority in speed, after the first attack of our fighters, left the battle using clouds or the sun.

During the three months of the war, the enemy never built up forces in air combat. The battle began in the air with one group, and it ended with her. The main method used by the enemy in air combat with our fighters is, given equal forces or a slight superiority, not to accept the battle, hide behind the clouds and wait for the separation of our individual aircraft from the group in order to deal with them in an unequal battle ...

If, after the first strike on [our] airfield or before it, the enemy did not receive opposition from the ground or from the air, all his planes formed a circle and continued bombardment and machine-gun fire with individual aiming until the ammunition load was completely used up, sometimes making up to 3-4 attacks. As a rule, the enemy did not make repeated attacks if at least 1 - 2 of our fighters were above the airfield ...

The enemy, fearing the partisans, and at the same time, due to the rapid advance, deployed his aircraft in whole regiments or more at one airfield. He always placed the planes in the center of the airfield in one or two lines. It was impossible to find a better target for our aviation ...

”(TsAMO, f. 221, on. 1374, d. 16, pp. 84-89)

Report of the Chief of Staff of the 88th IAP (VVS YuF) dated September 30, 1941

“At your order, I am reporting the main methods of enemy aviation tactics revealed by the flight crew of the regiment in the course of hostilities. 1. In

clear sunny weather, both enemy fighters and bombers always try to approach the target from the side of the sun. Enemy bombers are active during cloudy weather, using the clouds for covert flight. 2. In air combat, enemy fighters Me-109 and Xe-113 (as the Soviet Air Force called the

Messerschmitt-109 of the F series at that time) always try to have an advantage in height over our aircraft. Predominantly attacks from above and

after the attack with a combat turn, they again go up. During air combat, our planes are almost never below.

3. In air combat, enemy fighters actively fight only with a large advantage in strength. With an equal balance of forces, and even with their double advantage, they often evade the battle or quickly leave it. After the first attack, they gain altitude and, during a second attack, they try to attack our individual aircraft located on the flanks or at the end of the battle formation. 4. Avoid frontal attacks. 5. Often single fighters are "tied" to the tail

*aircraft coming from the mission and attack them during the landing approach.
(TsLMO, f. 20076, on. 1, d. 8A, l. 16)*

From the Report on the combat operations of the 11th SAD for the period from June 22 to December 19, 1941.

During the period of hostilities, the LaGG-3 aircraft has established itself as one of the best fighters of the Red Army Air Force. In terms of its flight tactical data and armament, it far surpasses all modern types of enemy fighters. The enemy, even with a significant numerical superiority, does not enter into battle with fighters. When attacking the LaGG-3, enemy fighters, as a rule, evade the battle. The LaGG-3 aircraft is equally maneuverable at all altitudes and has a large speed range.

The MiG-3 aircraft in use as an attack aircraft and reconnaissance aircraft did not prove itself due to insufficient training of the flight crew. In air battles, carried out mainly at altitudes of 500 - 1500 m, the MiG-3 proved to be less effective than the old I-16 type. In addition to low maneuverability at low altitudes, the MiG-3 has insufficiently strong armament, mainly cannon (as the text may have meant that the absence of a cannon reduces the effectiveness of the armament of this aircraft). The I-16 aircraft, thanks to its extensive experience in piloting technology and combat use in the past, in the face of the fight against the latest

types of enemy fighters, turned out to be enough

efficient. The big drawback of the I-16 fighter is the relatively weak armament, and most importantly, the depreciation of the weapon, which very often failed in air combat and during assault operations. With the installation of a more powerful engine and strengthening of weapons, the I-16 may well compete with new types of fighters, both friendly and enemy ... "(TsAMO, f. 20054-A, on. 1, d. 12, pp. 27-28)

From the recording of the meeting of the combat asset of the flight crew of the 123rd IAP, June 27, 1942

Brief information: The 123rd IAP met the war at the border airfields in the Brest-Kobrin area, on June 27 it was withdrawn for reorganization to Monino near Moscow; the pilots of the regiment in 12 days mastered the new Yak-1 fighter, since July 15, the regiment as part of the 6th IAK PVO has been fighting in the sky of Moscow (480 sorties have been completed), since September 21, as part of the 7th IAK PVO (Leningrad), it covers from the air Road of life. In total, in the first 12 months of the war, 3,010 sorties were made with a total flight time of 2,431 hours, 199 air battles were conducted, 102 enemy aircraft were declared shot down, and 27 aircraft were lost in the air. Subsequently, the regiment was transformed into the 27th Guards.

Captain Zhidov G.N., squadron commander, conducted 33 air battles, shot down 4 aircraft personally and 12 in the group, was awarded the Order of the Red Banner:
"What gives us the

opportunity to come out victorious? The first is that we fly on the Yak-1 aircraft, which in terms of its flight data is superior to the enemy Me-109 aircraft, with which we mainly have to conduct air combat. The second is that our pilots, skillfully using the machine, boldly enter the battle and win ...

Air combat on the Yak-1 aircraft with the Me-109 aircraft is easy, because. the Yak-1 aircraft is not inferior in speed, has a smaller turn radius, catches up with the Me-109 both in a dive and when climbing - in these cases, it is only necessary to use the R-7 (propeller pitch regulator) correctly: when diving, it is necessary to make the propeller pitch heavier, and when climbing, lighten the screw.

Pidtykan I. D., conducted 60 air battles, shot down 8 aircraft personally and 6 in a group, was awarded the Order of the Red Banner (hereinafter - Hero of the Soviet

Union): *Air combat on the I-16 aircraft can be successfully conducted with any type of enemy aircraft due to good maneuverability I-16. True, air combat sometimes takes the form of defense (especially with enemy fighters at altitudes above 2,000 m), but defense can also be very active and successful. Air combat is almost safe if you have developed good powers of observation.*

The most important moment in air combat is the beginning of the battle, i.e. it is necessary to be the first to detect the enemy or to see in time the moment when the enemy wants to attack our planes, and the second especially important moment is the exit from the battle ... The

best battle height for the I-16 is up to 3000 m, and the combat height is 1000 - 2000 m At this altitude, the I-16 aircraft will have maximum maneuverability and speed ... As soon as the enemy aircraft begins to attack, it is necessary to calmly go in the same direction, only with a slight slip (a maneuver in a horizontal plane, carried out with a minimum roll), in order to prevent him to conduct aimed fire. As you get closer, you need to move from defense to offensive, i.e. make a quick 180-degree turn, and fire, going into the frontal ...

Conducting air combat with enemy fighters on turns on the I-16 aircraft is successful, because. The I-16 turns better than any enemy aircraft... After the first successful attack, the German pilot is lost and will "dangle" in the sight until you shoot him down. "Junkers-87" has good maneuverability - the

turn radius is almost equal to the turn radius of the I-16. The plane in the air does not go in a straight line, but, as it were, "dances", thereby making it impossible to conduct aimed fire at it, but after the first attacks of our I-16s, all resistance almost ceases, and [the enemy pilot] goes in a straight line and does not try position your plane so that

the pilot himself could fire from a cannon or give the gunner-radio operator the opportunity to fire. Ju-87 easily shot down aircraft with skillful attacks...

Fight I-16 with Me-110. As in any air battle, here it is necessary to try to go into the tail, have an advantage in height and hit mainly from behind and in the tail, initially at the arrow, and then at the engines and cockpit. It is inappropriate to become in a turn, because The Me-110 turns very well on one engine, and its turn is equal to that of the Yak-1, and also because the gunner-radio operator will fire throughout the turn ... With a good engine on the I-16 aircraft, you can successfully go to the tail of the Me- 110, provided that he does not dive, but goes along the horizon ... "(TsAMO, f. 123 IAP, on. 459716, d. 1, ll. 1-3)

Annex 7 Soviet

Air Force through the eyes of a Wehrmacht General

This report was written in the late 1940s. as part of the US Army program to study and systematize the experience of the war. The author of the report is Colonel-General Erhard Rauss of the Wehrmacht.

“In terms of numbers, the Russian Air Force was greatly underestimated by the Germans before the start of the Eastern campaign. But, despite their numbers, which increased significantly during the war, they could not have a decisive influence on the outcome of the battles in the East.

Russian Air Force tactics were inflexible and strictly limited to fixed patterns. They lacked tactical flexibility. Only at the end of 1944 and at the beginning of 1945 could the first sprouts of a strategic air war be observed. Russian long-range aviation, which was monitored by German radio intelligence since 1941, carried out mainly transport operations. Although the Air Force was an independent part of the Russian armed forces, it was used almost exclusively on the battlefield, in joint operations with the army. The Germans identified impending Russian attacks, among other signs, by the early collection

and concentration of combat aircraft on airfields near the front line. In this regard, the Russians proved to be great experts in the construction of auxiliary airfields. Ruthlessly exploiting local labor resources and using the most primitive equipment, they were able to fully prepare the airfields in an amazingly short time. Neither winter, nor periods of rain or mudslides could interfere with their work. The Russian Air Force made extensive use of false airfields and mock-ups of aircraft, as well as numerous camouflage methods. In battle, the direction of air strikes and the degree of its participation were controlled by command posts located near the front line, one of the most qualitatively performed operations

in this regard was the control of fighters from the ground. On the other side,

the interaction between fighters and attack aircraft or bombers left much to be desired. Fighters rarely accompanied them during combat missions, and if there was an escort, it usually dispersed at the first contact with the enemy.

The Russians proved to be excellent pilots in bad weather. Although their aircraft were not equipped for instrument flight, fighters and attack aircraft appeared over the battlefield in the worst weather. In order to take the enemy by surprise, they liked to use low clouds and snowstorms. Russian night fighters tended to limit themselves to attacking only targets they were ordered to destroy, and were only instrumented for the most basic navigation. The Germans were surprised to find that Russian night lights almost always flew with side lights on.

Air formations concentrated for operations always found a rapid drop in combat potential as soon as they entered combat. The number of combat-ready aircraft was rapidly declining, and it took quite a long time to bring them back into combat-ready condition. The Russians made extensive use

of artificial smoke for businesses, camouflage, and the protection of railroad junctions and bridges against strategic air attacks. The rapid repair of bombing damage was particularly noteworthy, especially in the case of railroad facilities. And again, for these purposes, labor from the local civilian population was ruthlessly involved.

During the war, air supply operations reached significant proportions. Aircraft either delivered supplies to airfields or dropped them by parachute. Dropping agents and saboteurs behind the front line played a special role.

At the beginning of the war, Russian ground forces were extremely vulnerable to air attacks. However, things changed very soon. Russian troops became less vulnerable to the attacks of German dive bombers and attack aircraft. The Russians paid much attention to preparing troops for defense against low-altitude attacks. All available weapons in the troops turned against the attacker

aircraft, thus forming a dense defense. When the weather allowed, the Russian troops avoided settlements and masterfully hid in the area. If, in exceptional cases, they took refuge in populated areas, they received strict orders not to go outside during the daytime. As part of the Soviet ideology, as the war went on, the Russians used an increasing number of female pilots

and other crew members. Women not only flew transport aircraft, but also flew combat vehicles. In conclusion, we can say that the Russian Air Force, although large in number and built on a grand scale, was prepared very primitively. Their will to fight, aggressive spirit and mastery of the technical aspects left much to be

desired. Constantly outnumbering the Luftwaffe, they always underperformed when it came to combat. Usually a small number of German fighters were enough to clear the skies of Russian aircraft.

Translation by Evgeny Kovalev

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282. TsAMO, f. 122 IAP, op. 143365, d. 1, l. 5.

283. TsAMO, f. 208, op. 2589, d. 46, l. 1.

284. TsAMO, f. 208, op. 2589, d. 46, l.

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l. 4. 286. TsAMO, f. 208, op. 3038, d. 15, l. 7 (quoted from SBD #35, p. 137).

287. TsAMO, f. 208, op. 2589, d. 53, l. 4 (turnover).

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289. TsAMO, f. 208, op. 2589, d. 42, l. 133; f. 20054A, op. 1, d. 12, l. 47.

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29.

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notes

1

Despite the lies repeated an infinite number of times, the events of the Game had nothing to do with the actual defeat of the troops of the Western and North-Western Fronts in June 1941. During the Game, an offensive operation was practiced, the main events of which unfolded west of the borders of the USSR: the area of the "Suwalk ledge", part of East Prussia up to the Pregol River, successfully crossed the river. Narev and tried to encircle the "Western" between Insterburg and Allenstein (now Chernyakhovsk and Opole). Subsequently, the offensive of the "Eastern" bogged down, and the "Western", which during the Game was really commanded by G. Zhukov, surrounded part of the forces of the "Eastern" to the west of the river. Narew. The tasks assigned to the "Eastern" on the instructions of the Game were not fulfilled, however, nothing even remotely similar to the German breakthrough to Vilnius, Baranovichi and Minsk, did not happen in the Game, the maximum depth of advancement of the "Western" into Soviet territory did not exceed 20 - 30 km. Colonel Bobylev wrote about all this in detail, based on real documents, 17 years ago. (4)

2

So, for example, three (!) air groups were based at the Suwalki airfield: I / ZG-26, II / ZG-26 and III / KG-3, 118 aircraft at one airfield; also three groups (all fighter: III / JG-27, II / JG-52, III / JG-53), 117 "Messers" were based at the Sobolevo airfield (15 km southeast of Suwalki).

3

The word "force" in this case is clearly inappropriate - the outlines of the border of the 41st year did not coincide with the current one, the city of Tilsit and the strip of the right (northern) bank of the Neman, 15 to 50 km wide, were located on the territory of East Prussia, so that along the bridges across the Neman in In the Tilsit area, the Germans simply crossed without a fight. Most likely, the word "forced" appeared here as a result of self-censorship - the strike on the adjacent territory in the first hours of the war did not fit into the version of history that everyone, including the direct participants in the events, had become accustomed to for 60 years

4

Directive on the Use of Operational Aircraft and Facilities

Air defense in the zone of action of the Army Group "North" of May 5, 1941 (62)

5

A well-known tragic episode is connected with the 8th SAD: on April 10, 1941, a flight (three MiG-3s) from the 31st IAP was raised to intercept a German high-altitude reconnaissance aircraft that violated the border west of Kaunas. At high altitude (that is, when piloting a capricious and unstable "flash" at high angles of attack), all three fighters fell into a tailspin, as a result of which two aircraft were irretrievably broken and ml. Lieutenant Yevtushenko.

6

Even after the defeat and huge losses of equipment, by September 3, 1941, the headquarters of the NWF Air Force had on their equipment 1 "front" radio station PAT (with a range of more than 600 km), 51 "corps" radio stations with a range of about 200 - 300 km (4 RAF, 35 11-AK, 12 RSB) and 27 "regimental" (with a range of 25 - 50 km) 5-AK. (89)

7

Already in the afternoon of June 22, all military, civil and party authorities (the headquarters of the 11th army, the government of Soviet Lithuania and the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Bolsheviks) fled from Kaunas. For two days - the Germans entered Kaunas only on the evening of June 24 - street battles took place in the city between armed detachments of Lithuanian nationalists and scattered units of the Red Army units retreating along the bridges across the Neman; in such a situation, the evacuation of the families of command personnel was not so much the removal of household belongings as the only way to save the lives of women and children.

8

Most likely, Shiess describes an air battle that took place on the morning of June 22 in the sky over Kobrin, where the headquarters link of the JG-53 squadron met with the "seagulls" of the 123rd IAP; in this battle, the Germans claimed three downed I-153s.

9

Judging by the well-known memorandum of L. Beria dated January 29, 1942, Ionov was "revealed" that back in 1939 he became a participant in the "anti-Soviet military conspiracy" and "carried out sabotage in airfield construction"; not a word was said about his responsibility for the defeat of the NWF Air Force. It may very well be that the arrest and reprisal took place as part of the grandiose "aviator case", which the NKGB had been promoting since May 1941, and had nothing to do with Ionov's actions as commander of the front air force.

10

Strictly speaking, combat operations in encirclement (we are not talking here about a platoon of reconnaissance officers surrounded in a forest clearing that can be shot through at any point) differ from "non-encirclement" precisely in that the encircled group is deprived of the opportunity to receive material resources from the rear and, having used up available stocks of ammunition, fuel and food, loses the ability to resist. A classic example of this is the encirclement of the 6th German Army near Stalingrad. By definition, the Germans could not have warehouses created in advance near the Volga, the supply of the army before its encirclement went "from the wheels", it was not possible to accumulate significant reserves in such a situation, and winter and the deserted steppe made it impossible to use "local resources" to provide those surrounded with food

and fuel.

eleven

The Ju-87 dive bomber had only five bomb suspension points: four under the wings and one (on a "rocking chair" that brings the bomb out of the plane of rotation of the propeller) under the fuselage, and only 50-kg bombs could be hung under the wings to fight against the Soviet KB and T-34 tanks are practically unusable.

12

The list of "assault" here includes the 215th BAP (12th BAD), armed with I-15 biplanes; The 212th DBAP under the command of Golovanov, which is called "separate" in a number of sources, is included in the 3rd DBAK.

13

The regiment's documents indicate large numbers: "Out of 103 pilots in the regiment, 68 pilots flew MiG-3 aircraft and were trained for combat operations."

14

The history of the mass construction of concrete runways, which began in the spring of 1941 at existing and newly constructed airfields in the western districts, deserves close attention. All types of front-line fighters, attack aircraft and short-range bombers of the Soviet Air Force (and this is about nine-tenths of the entire fleet) could well be operated (and were operated in reality) from unpaved strips. A concrete runway with a length of 1 km or more was required only for long-range bombers (Er-2, TB-7), the meaning of which appearance at border airfields is unclear. Maybe concrete "waterproof" lanes became needed on the eve of the autumn-winter war? At least, in Stalin's well-known speech at a meeting of the senior officers of the Red Army (April 17, 1940), the expediency of using the winter period was persistently emphasized, for military operations in which the Russian army (according to Stalin) was traditionally more prepared than its European opponents...

15

Unlike an anti-aircraft gun, the activation time of which is measured in seconds, a fighter aircraft needs to warm up the engine, taxi to the runway, take off, gain the altitude and speed necessary for air combat. Even in the most ideal case, this will take 3-4 minutes, and during this time the enemy air raid may already be over. To this we must add that at the stage of takeoff and climb, the fighter turns from a "hunter" into a "game". This problem could be radically solved either by continuous air patrols over the airfield (which will inevitably lead to a huge consumption of fuel and motor resources for passive self-defense), or by organizing a reliable early warning system, which was hardly real in the "pre-locator era".

16

Two-thirds of the maximum flight range of the SB, Ar-2, Pe-2 bombers is about 500 - 600 km; for bombers of the "first echelon", based no further than 100 - 150 km from the border, and even in a situation where the enemy did not move away, but approached, such a flight duration would be quite enough.

17

In this regard, it makes sense to recall once again that, in accordance with the Order of the People's Commissar of Defense No. 0020 dated March 11, 1941, 8-10 flight hours were allotted for retraining a pilot for a new type of aircraft (see RGVA, f. 4, op. 15- 6, d. 2, l. 16), and the actual practice of the war showed that in the course of numerous rearmament of fighter units (from donkeys to migis, from migs to yaks, from yaks to cobras ", etc.) the development of the new aircraft by the flight crew was quite real in one, maximum two months.

18

L. M. Sandalov (at the beginning of the war - Colonel, Chief of Staff of the 4th Army of the Western Front) in his memoirs reports that from June 19, an "auxiliary front command post" was deployed in Obus-Lesna, where by the time the hostilities began, there were actually Deputy Commander of the Western OVO, Lieutenant General Kurdyumov, Head of the Operational Department of the District Headquarters, Major General Semyonov, and Chief of Communications of the District, Major General Grigoriev.

19

It is noteworthy that all the fighter groups of the 2nd Luftwaffe Air Fleet, operating in the 9th SAD lane, announced on June 22, 1941, only three downed Soviet I-18 fighters (as the Germans called the MiG-3 in the early days of the war), between 7.27 and 7.35 Berlin time they were shot down by the sixth squadron of JG-51).

20

There is reason to believe that shortly before the start of the war, 6 I-153s were transferred from the 129th IAP to the 33rd IAP (10th SAD), but as a result of the delay in passing information through headquarters, this fact was not reflected in the documents; in this case, the arithmetic remainder for the "seagulls" will be 14.

21

Marshal Timoshenko himself was the commander of the Western Front at that time. This is probably why the instruction (“an order to explain to all command personnel, including regimental commanders”) followed, and copies of the document were sent to the headquarters of formations of other fronts.

22

Judging by the documents of the regiment, immediately before the start of hostilities, 6 "gulls" and two new MiG-1s were transferred to its composition.

23

M. Timin with reference to the materials of the archives of TsAMO f. 35, op. 11285, d. 318 reports that shortly before the start of the war, the 74th ShAP transferred 13 I-15bis to the 215th BAP (12th BAD), but due to the delay in passing information through the authorities in most other documents, this fact not reflected; if this message is true, then "all of them" were not 62, but 49 (34 I-15bis and 15 I-153).

24

Between 9.23 - 9.30 Berlin time, the 4th squadron of the JG-51 fighter squadron claimed 2 I-16s shot down; another I-16 was shot down (declared) at 9.45 Berlin time by the 1st squadron of the JG-53 squadron.

25

Unfortunately, I cannot confirm this message with an exact quote, because I got acquainted with the archival file (f. 117, op. 12915, file 352) at the very moment when the TsAMO leadership began to fight against the spread of “defamatory information”; as a result, I failed to make a photocopy of that page of the file, where the flying and commanding skills of Boris Nikolaevich Surin were highly appreciated.

26

A few days later, Captain Savchenko will die during an attack on a German mechanized column in the Bobruisk region.

27

On the morning of June 22, there were 21 Pe-2s at the Bobruisk airfield, destined for the 16th BAP; according to M. Timin, they were already formally enrolled in the 16th BAP, in fact, there were not 37, but only 16 "pawns" in the regiment.

28

July 9, 1941 Lieutenant Yeroshin was posthumously awarded the Order of the Red Banner.

Under the designation "Dornier-215" an export version was produced Do-17Z, technical differences between them were minimal; in the future, all vehicles prepared for export were transferred to the Luftwaffe.

thirty

In the documents of the 122nd IAP, the 11th SAD and the ZF Air Force, I could not find any traces of the story told by S. F. Dolgushin about weapons removed from fighters on the evening of June 21. Moreover, I could not find Lieutenant Dolgushin in the lists of the flight personnel of the 122nd IAP, and in the "Report on the combat work of the regiment" - any mention of him. Perhaps this testifies to my inattention, perhaps to the inattention of the compilers of the Report.

31

In another version of S. F. Dolgushin's memoirs, this strange phrase about "bachelors" has an explanation: "But frankly, those who had wives went to their wives, and we, bachelors, flew away. After the death of Ganichev, no one commanded the division ... "

32

Strictly speaking, the 16th BAP has not disappeared; On July 6, he again appears in the 11th SAD (by that time it had replaced both the commander and the composition), having 14 Pe-2s available, which completed 80 sorties by the end of the month; it can be assumed that these are “pawns” who were on June 22 at the Bobruisk airfield, and pilots who did not “relocate” too deep to the rear (TsAMO, f. 20054-A, d. 1, op. 20, ll. 15, 17, 19).

33

Here and further in this paragraph, the transcription of names is brought into line with modern Polish toponyms; the original texts of the documents used a variety of spellings.

The document states that the 163rd IAP was in Baranovichi, and the 162nd IAP was relocated to Pukhovichi, however, judging by all other documents, this is just a misprint.

35

The twin-engine multi-seat aircraft was designed as a training machine for training bomber crews, later the Fw-58 was also used as a transport, communications, and ambulance aircraft.

36

In the 1941 plan for the rearmament of the air regiments of the Red Air Force
The army is not mentioned at all by the new materiel of the 6th BAP.

37

Skripko in his memoirs also writes about three downed aircraft in the 96th BAP, however, in the report of the 42nd Air Division on the 96th BAP compiled at the end of the year, there are 10 aircraft shot down and / or made forced landings on the evening of June 22.

38

However, even with losses “without the influence of the enemy” not everything is simple; for example, the 2nd group of the LG-2 squadron managed to destroy 9 aircraft during takeoff and landing (7 Messers and 2 Henschels) in one day on June 22, and two of them irretrievably. Is it possible that all this "case" did without the influence of the enemy, i.e. Soviet fighters and anti-aircraft guns?

39

In the report of the headquarters of the 9th SAD dated June 25, we read: "Enemy aircraft were shot down in air battles: 41st IAP - 6, 124th IAP - 3, 126th IAP - it turns out, but not less than 4, 129th IAP "There is no exact data."

40

Judging by Operational Report No. 02 of the headquarters of the 121st BAP, there were more sorties and losses. Three squadrons of the regiment completed 26 sorties, 90 FAB-100s and 36 AO-25s were dropped. The losses are described as follows: "17 aircraft did not return from a combat mission, of which 4 were shot down over the target, the rest, pursued by fighters, were pulled into their territory." The episode with the 4th AE is described quite remarkably: "as a result of fighter attacks and the presence of our own troops on the sides of the column of tanks, the bombs were not dropped."

41

The reserve air regiment of front-line subordination was based at the Kholmech and Bronnoye airfields.

42

In Operational Report No. 04 of the headquarters of the 121st BAP, it was noted that the bombing of mechanized columns was carried out by links from a height of 5-8 km, the Ivantsevichi airfield was bombed from a height of 5.3 km, and the Pruzhany airfield - from a height of 1.3 km. It is not surprising that only in the latter case "after the bombing, a fire was observed at the airfield."

43

Even the headquarters of the 2nd TGr was hit by Soviet bombers. Guderian writes in his memoirs: "On the morning of June 25, I visited the hospital where the wounded were, who had been injured a day ago during the bombardment of our command post, during which I was on another sector of the front."

44

Gorodzeya (1400x1200 m), Zelva (1150x1200 m), Derevyanchitsy (1250x1100 m), Grudopol (1400x1200 m), Nesvizh (750x700 m), Mir (900x800 m); even the smallest of them was quite suitable for takeoff and landing of the I-16 light fighter.

45

In accordance with the will of the writer, his body was cremated after death, and the ashes were scattered over the Buinichsky field near Mogilev - where K. Simonov fought in June - July 1941 and left the encirclement along with the heroes of his future novel.

46

According to the data presented in the well-known statistical collection of Krivosheev ("The classification has been removed"), as of January 1, 1942, there were 5.4 thousand combat (not counting training, transport, sanitary, etc.) aircraft in the active army, for 1 January 1943 - 12.3 thousand

47

By the way, this is precisely one of the two most important differences between the events of June 22, 1941 and Pearl Harbor, where the command of the naval base did not receive any clear instructions from Washington until the last minutes before the Japanese attack; the second difference is that Pearl Harbor is a point (an island in the ocean) on which a concentrated strike was made (360 sorties within 2 hours), and any attempt to compare the effectiveness and consequences of a successful sabotage with a full-scale war is absurd.

48

Certificate of the Chief of the Operational Directorate of the Red Army Air Force Headquarters, Lieutenant General Zhuravlev "Information on aircraft losses during the two years of the war", signed on October 6, 1943.

49

On fronts: 4.1 thousand sorties in the NWF Air Force, 3.2 thousand - in the Air Force of the Northern Front, 5.4 thousand - in the Air Force of the South-Western Front, 2.3 thousand - in the Air Force of the Southern Front; for the NWF and SWF, the figures are calculated, obtained by recalculating data for other time intervals.